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Mobile Beat

THE MOBILE ENTERTAINER'S MAGAZINE • WWW.MOBILEBEAT.COM

ISSUE 166 NOVEMBER 2015

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NEW COLUMNS:

**DJS SPIN ON PEAVEY
KEITH SHOCKLEE**

PHOTO BOOTHS IN FOCUS

KARAOKE DOWNLOADS.CA

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The screenshot shows the KaraokeDownloads.CA website. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links like 'Help', 'Terms & Conditions', 'Vouchers', 'Starter Packs', 'Free Player', 'TriceraREWARDS', 'Sell Karaoke', and 'Albums'. Below this, the main header features the site name 'KaraokeDownloads.CA' and a banner for 'FROZEN' with a 'CLICK HERE FOR OUR NEW FROZEN ALBUM' button. A search bar is prominently displayed with filters for 'Both', 'MP3+G', and 'MP3+G (with lyrics)'. Below the search bar, there's a 'Song List' table with columns for 'Description', 'Preview', 'Company', 'Genre', and 'Length'. The table lists various songs, including 'Aashiyaa', 'Am I Wrong', 'Bad Baby Sister (explicit)', 'Black Widow', 'Chandeliers', 'Don't', 'Don't Try To Carry An Elephant', 'Don't Try To Carry An Elephant', 'Don't Try To Carry An Elephant', and 'El Capitan (explicit)'. To the right of the song list, there's a 'Login and Information' section with a user profile for 'Karaoke Lover' and a 'Shopping Cart' section showing the current mode as 'MP3+G Downloads'.

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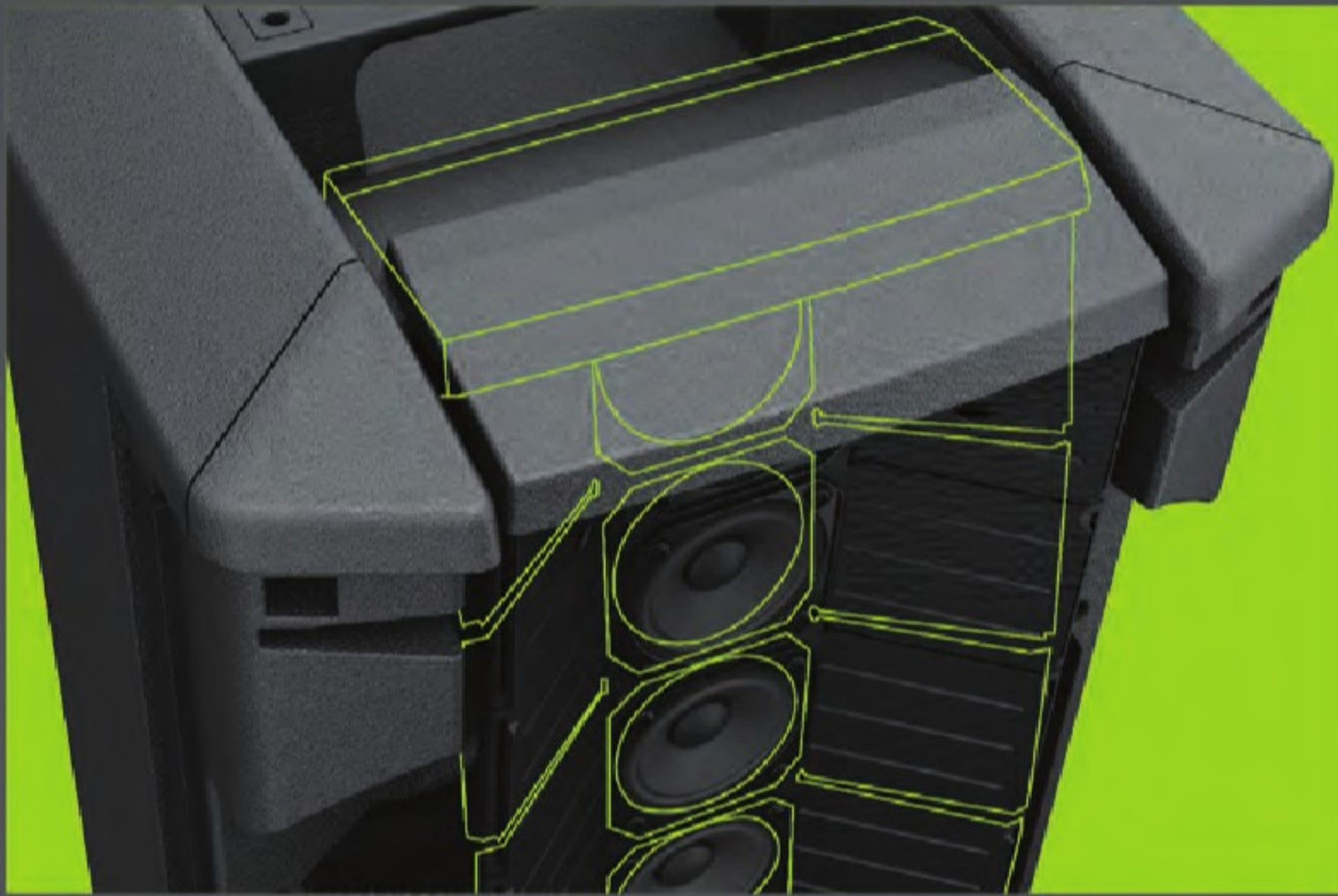
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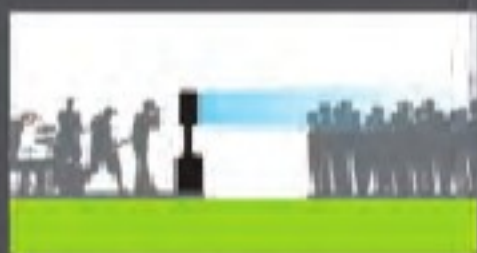


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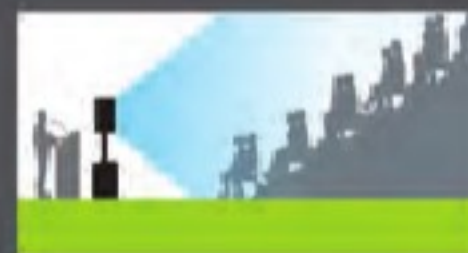
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PEOPLE POWER

14



**Feeling
the Shine
of Full
Time**

58



**Your
Couple's
Wedding,
Their Way**

66



**Multi-Op
Essentials**

PLAYLIST

TRACK ONE	6
JUICE	8
MILESTONES: MOBILE BEAT 25 • MBLV 20	10
Covering MB <i>By Mike Buonaccorso</i>	
WEDDING BEAT	12
People Power...or Guest Request Overload? <i>By Staci Nichols</i>	
FEATURE	14
Feeling the Shine of Full Time <i>By DJ Dayna</i>	
THE WEEKDAY GAME	18
Midweek Success: More Than Just the Money <i>By Marc Andrews</i>	
DJS SPIN ON PEAVEY - NEW!	20
Keith Shocklee: a Peavey DJ from Way Back	
CARVING YOUR NICHE	24
Positive People Perspective <i>By Jim Papa</i>	
FEATURE	26
What's Old Is New Again <i>By Stu Chisholm</i>	
PLAY SOMETHING WE CAN DANCE TO!	30
From a Strong Start to an Impressive Finish <i>By Jay Maxwell</i>	
CROWDPLEASER	32
A Piece of His Heart: Bert Berns <i>By Mike Ficher</i>	
MOBILE BEAT DEALERS	34
<i>Gear Stores Across the Nation</i>	
THE SPIN DOCTOR	36
Billboard: Charting the Hits for 75 Years <i>By Mike Ryan</i>	
PHOTO BOOTHS IN FOCUS - NEW!	40
♦ Mobile Photo Booth: Reloaded – 40	
♦ Darkroom Booth 2 Software – 42 <i>By Ryan Burger</i>	
PRO DJ FILES	44
♦ Jason Spencer – 44	
♦ Adam Skuba – 46	
FEATURE	48
To Amp or Not to Amp? <i>By Scott Jarema</i>	

CONTINUED...

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PLAYLIST

SCOOP	50
♦ KRK Rokit 8 G3 Powered Desktop Monitors – 50	
By Jake Feldman	
♦ Crown XLS DriveCore™ 2 Series: XLS 1502 Amp – 50	
By Michael Buonaccorso, Jr.	
♦ EV EKX-12P / EKX-18SP – 50	
By Jake Feldman	
♦ HK Audio Lucas Nano 600 and Elements – 50	
By Marc Andrews	
KARAOKE PARAPHERNALIA	56
Vocopro DKP-3 SD Card Karaoke Player	
By Michael Buonaccorso	
E-BEAT	57
Flyboost Social Media Software Aggregator	
By Jason Jani	
FEATURE	58
Your Couple's Wedding, Their Way	
By Donnie Lewis	
DJ RESOURCES	60
The Secrets of DJing The Perfect Wedding by Jason Parkinson	
By Ryan Burger	
BOOK MORE BRIDES	62
7 Things DJs Do That Drive Wedding Clients Nuts!	
By Stephanie Padovani	
ENTRELEADERSHIP	63
Telling Time Where to Go, What to Do	
By Dave Ramsey	
GITOMER ON SALES	64
This Place Couldn't Survive Without Me...	
By Jeffrey Gitomer	
INDEX OF ADVERTISERS	65
THE LAST WORD	66
Multi-Op Essentials	
By Jason Weldon	

TRACK ONE

“It's..People!” Unlike the classic Charlton Heston line from *Soylent Green*, the theme of this issue, “People Power,” should not be a horrifying thought. No, we all know that serving people (no, not as in the also-classic *Twilight Zone* episode, “To Serve Man”) is at the core of running a successful DJ business. It's obvious but also something that we should be careful not to take for granted.

To facilitate your people-focus, we are offering an interesting variety of articles this time around. Staci Nichols provides council on how to handle the new trend of oversized request lists generated by couples' personal wedding websites. Donnie Lewis shares some great ways to make sure your wedding clients enjoy a truly unique event. Jay Maxwell provides solid advice and specific song lists to keep your receptions rolling full-steam from start to finish. And Stephanie Padovani covers “seven things that drive wedding clients nuts.” Time to listen up!

We are also looking at “people power” from the DJ's perspective. Are you a solo DJ thinking about going multi-op? Check out Jason Weldon's checklist to make sure you understand the big picture. Are you a solo part-timer looking at the leap into full time? DJ Dayna's personal story of transition should inform and inspire you.

As far as specific people in the DJ industry are concerned, in this issue, we proudly unveil a new column, in partnership with Peavey, that will put the spotlight on Peavey DJ product users. First up, DJ/producer Keith Shocklee, of Public Enemy fame and a creative force behind a wide range of hip-hop and pop recordings. (Also note that Keith will also be at the DJ Takeover at MBLV20, sponsored by Peavey.) Other profiles include Adam Skuba, and Jason Spencer, a presenter on business success at MBLV20 next March.

And finally, there's another new feature of note in the gear section. “Photo Booths in Focus” deals with this people-centric add-on technology that many DJs have leveraged for greater profits.

We hope this issue gives you some fresh perspectives on serving the people in your world, whether they're clients, employees or others. And don't forget to take care of yourself too!

~ Dan Walsh, Editor-in-Chief

Mobile Beat

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Enjoy the Silence

Gut-busting bass AND clear conversation—in the same room?! “Impossible!” you say? Well, the Sunday evening before MBLV’s official kickoff will feature two key draws of DJ industry events: networking and learning from others...PLUS, two (yes, two) cranking DJs performing IN THE SAME ROOM.

How can super networking and multiple DJs spinning happen at same time?

It’s simple. Come to the Tropicana on Sunday evening (March 13, 2016) to pick up your MBLV badge and join Mobile Beat, Party Headphones/Silent Disco and the San Diego Disc Jockey Association



for a completely unique “Welcome to Las Vegas” party. Using Party Headphones/Silent Disco’s high-tech, wireless headphone solution for parties, weddings and beyond, you will be able to choose between two different DJs, or turn the headphones off and network with other professionals.

The Takeover Continues...

The DJ Takeover tradition continues at MBLV20, as signature sponsor Peavey hosts the event and shows off its newest loudspeaker technology for DJs, at MBLV’s new venue, the Tropicana Las Vegas. ...The event will be produced by Bill Jakub and Mobile Beat, while the outdoor party scene will be lit by Omez Lighting.

The DJ Takeover tradition continues at MBLV20 with MC and Host Keith Shocklee of the legendary rap group Public Enemy. Signature sponsor Peavey will also be showing off their latest technology in loudspeakers for DJs, at MBLV’s new venue, the Tropicana Las Vegas. Along with Shocklee, other Peavey-endorsed DJs will add to the electrifying mix at this event produced by



Bill Jakub and Mobile Beat.

Now held outdoors at the Tropicana Pool (due to the great spring weather of Las Vegas in March), the DJ Takeover will be a fun combination of networking, DJ performances and more. Make sure to check out mobilebeatlasvegas.com for further info, including the DJs playing. Applications for 15-20 minute spots can be completed below and will

be reviewed in December.

For nearly five decades, Peavey has blazed its own path toward musical perfection. Founded by Hartley Peavey in 1965 as a one-man shop, today Peavey Electronics Corporation is one of the largest makers and suppliers of musical instruments, amplifiers and professional audio systems in the world—distributing more than 2,000 products to more than 130 countries.

Making its MBLV debut this year, Omez Lighting is a popular manufacturer serving mobile DJs and other lighting pro-



professionals. Omez is especially known for its professional stage lighting with high-powered LEDs.

DJ Rocks TEDx Stage

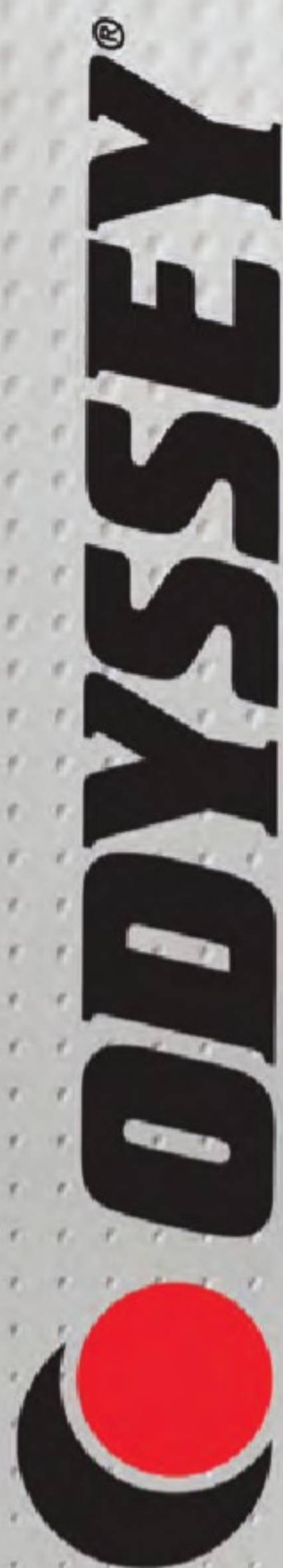
Being chosen to give a TED Talk has become a coveted sign of success for anyone with an “idea worth spreading” and the ability to share it in front of an audience. Growing out the original TED (Technology, Entertainment, Design) events conceived back in 1984 by architect/graphic designer Richard Saul Wurman, TEDx events are independent, approved regional showcases that follow the strict guidelines of the TED brand.

The DJ community has now been

represented by one of its own on a TEDx stage. On June 13, 2015 Larry Williams was selected to speak at TEDx Frontrange in Colorado. The only speaker of the day to receive a full TED-length 18 minutes time slot, his talk “Develop Your B-Sides” rocked the TEDx stage. Larry says, “Getting invited to speak is not easy and is a huge honor.” The video now also serves as a sneak peak of a 45-minute

keynote presentation he shares at conferences and other events. For more info go to www.larrypresents.com. **MB**





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Covering MB

COFOUNDER SHARES TWO FAVORITES FROM THE EARLY YEARS

By Mike Buonaccorso



EXPLOSIVE COVER

The first year of Mobile Beat (1991-92) could be considered one of the “fun” years. We still weren’t sure if the magazine would be taken seriously, and the inside 56 pages were still newsprint, so a lot of the content could be considered “whimsical.”

That was the case for MB #6, February/March 1992, which included our first coverage of the LDI show, held that year in Reno, Nevada. With a small staff but a large imagination, we spoofed the show and the self-proclaimed “biggest little city in the world.” The issue included instructions for the Electric Slide and we even found a local Reno mobile DJ to invite as our

guest to get his impressions of the show. A stealthy look at raves was included in “A Walk On The Wild Side, Pt.1.”

The story of the cover was also a



little wild, as it featured a burning car—something every DJ thinks about a lot, right? Alas, it had no connection to anything. It was simply a random photo of an explosive pyrotechnics demonstration at LDI, in the parking lot of the Reno Convention Center. But it was a cool photo...and too good to waste!

LIGHTING AND THE LUXOR

The October/November 1995 issue (#28) of Mobile Beat featured the latest in

lighting, so, when conceiving the cover, we had a little fun with the fact that I had just come back from Las Vegas, a city known for its abundance of entertaining lighting. This is what I said then, twenty years ago:

It seemed very appropriate that for this lighting issue I would seek out a truly outrageous light show for a cover. Where better to search than Las Vegas, Nevada, the glitter capital of the world? So I boarded a plane and set out to find the ultimate luminosity.

Upon landing in Las Vegas, a 30-story black glass pyramid surrounded by a grove of palm trees and graced with a obelisk and a 10-story Sphinx could be seen in the distance. Had I somehow been rerouted to Cairo? As I drew near, a 20-watt argon laser light show beamed from the obelisk, cutting across the exterior of the pyramid with beams of gold, aqua, purple, and white, all culminating in a beam of

light shooting straight up out of the top of the pyramid. I had found my way to the Luxor Hotel and Casino, and was looking at what is billed as the most powerful light in the world, a vertical circular shaft of light of about 36 billion candlepower. The beam has been sighted from the ground at a distance of 45 miles, and from the air at a distance of well over 100 miles...

Looking up I was struck by an awesome thought...as I pictured myself in the ultimate DJ booth entertaining the Pharaoh, or was it Cleopatra at her wedding reception? That image burned into my brain as I returned to New York. Before it faded I was on the phone with our design consultant and before it slipped away...we had this issue's cover...

Do you see the DJ on the cover? It's me! **MB**



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People Power... or Guest Request Overload?

87 WEDDING WEBSITE REQUESTS TO PLAY IN 3 HOURS?
HERE'S HOW TO GET THE SITUATION UNDER CONTROL

By Staci Nichols

Wedding guest song requests made via the couple's wedding website before the big day is a trend I'm eagerly waiting to see blow over. I'm guessing couples must do this because they've hired a DJ they don't trust and feel micro-management is their only solution for regaining a sense of confidence.

I love the idea of involving guests and trying to provide an ideal entertainment experience for all, but, in my experience, most couples haven't done the math here: It'll take me over *four hours* to play all those song requests—and I have the couple's must-plays to handle as well. The songs are rarely good for the overall enjoyment of the group, and the ones that are you would have probably played anyway, right? In a nutshell, it's a train wreck.

The question is how to keep guests feeling involved (like all their requests weren't just thrown in the trash) and still have the space you need to match BPMs, transition between genres, and raise the roof. Here are a few tricks I've used in the few instances I've been presented with a laundry list of website requests.

CROSS OUT SONGS THE COUPLE DOESN'T LIKE

Clearly this list of 87 website requests is going to have to be pared down. Start by having the couple remove songs they don't like from the list. Simple enough. In my experience, you can reduce the list by 25-50% with this one trick alone.



DJ and Officiant Staci Nichols owns Revolution Weddings and Country Wedding DJ in San Diego. Her wedding know-how has appeared on Wed Loft, Offbeat Bride, Wedding Planner Magazine and others. She has a B.A. from the University of Redlands' Johnston Center for Integrative Studies in Sociology. Even though you might catch her hosting the Stagecoach Festival's Honky Tonk or DJing at a local club, she's a wedding junkie through and through.

PLAY NON-DANCEABLES DURING COCKTAILS AND DINNER

You know those songs that are great for singing along in the car or cleaning house but just do not translate onto the wedding reception dance floor? Use your expertise and experience to advise the couple that ABC and XYZ songs can be taken care of before open dancing. Hint: This is an especially helpful trick to use for guests that your clients haven't seen actually ever dance and/or are fairly certain will not dance regardless of the circumstance.

SHINE LIGHT ON GUESTS FOR AN UNEXPECTED TWIST

As you are going through the website request list with your clients, ask them if they know the story behind any of the requests. Was "You're Still the One" the First Dance song at her cousin Mary's wedding four years ago? Take note of it, gather as many details as you can, and mention it if/when you play the song at the wedding. Even just mentioning the name of who requested what contributes to guests feeling more involved and sticking around until the last dance. Don't be afraid to discuss with the couple which extra special guests would be best to highlight (someone who traveled a great distance to attend, the only kid who's going to be there, etc.).

ASK THE COUPLE TO UPDATE THEIR WEDDING WEBSITE/SOCIAL MEDIA

Another sticky point with these wedding website requests is that now her Aunt Sue and his cousin Frankie are expecting "Ring of Fire" and "Besame Mucho"—and they'll be watching you like a hawk until they hear them. Have the couple pre-empt some of this tension by updating their wedding website before the big day to read: "Thanks for your song requests! We got such a great response that we most likely won't be able to play each request. We are planning a super fun celebration that we're sure you'll greatly enjoy as much as we plan to. Love you all and can't wait to see you soon!"

ON THE ACTUAL WEDDING DAY

About two minutes before you plan to put on a request, create a bit of buzz by announcing, "In two minutes, find out what Best Man Ryan requested for the dance floor tonight!" This lets the guests know that the website requests were not just all tossed in the trash. I also tells Best Man Ryan that his butt better be on the dance floor in two minutes—and it gives him time to round up some buddies to join him or to plan who is doing the Worm first. Finally, it signals to the guests if the song is a flop why you might be fading it out and moving on quicker than expected.

Hopefully these ideas have given you some food for thought, and maybe even inspired you come up with your own methods to deal with the latest trend that's come along to test our patience and creativity. **MB**

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Feeling the Shine of Full Time

ONE DJ'S JOURNEY INTO THE BRAVE NEW WORLD OF A FULL-TIME SOLO CAREER

By DJ Dayna

Photo by Dalmar Bentley

Each of us has gone on a different journey when it comes to transitioning from a part-time mobile DJ into a full-time mobile DJ. But we all have one thing in common: that moment when you make the decision to tap into your inner performer and passion to DJ as a career instead of a hobby or second job. Not every DJ wants to go full time, which is completely fine. This is my personal journey thus far, after making that life-changing decision. I hope it educates and inspires you, while also giving a realistic view of the road ahead, if you are thinking about your own next step.

I never thought I'd choose to provide awesome music soundtracks and entertain people at events as a career. I'd be lying if I didn't say I was born as an entertainer though. I can remember putting together a choreographed gymnastic or dance routine for company when they'd come over to the house for dinner, or setting up my red Little Tikes radio at the bus stop and putting my roller skates on to perform for the people while they waited. I grew up in a household where music was played frequently, so I fell in love with what music can do to one's soul and spirit. And of course, I loved to dance to it!

HOLLYWOOD LIGHTS

I first was introduced to the world of DJing while attending college at Miami University of Ohio. I fell in with several area

mic-masters and became their #1 fan. When the owner of the DJ company talked to me one night about trying it out, I immediately jumped at the offer. It seemed like a natural fit for me, not to mention a pretty good way to make some extra cash. The excitement and creativity I found behind the turntables was exhilarating and I started spinning at nightclubs and bars, as well as private and campus events. To compliment my live shows, I joined the college radio station to cohost a weekend music show.

After graduation, I continued to spin on the weekends while pursuing a career in TV broadcasting, which is what I really went to college for. I moved out to Los Angeles to continue to pursue my dream, but to help pay the bills I also subcontracted as a DJ/MC/dancer on the weekends and even took a position as an office manager with a DJ company until I could get "my break" in TV journalism or some other niche I might discover in the crazy entertainment world. After years of many challenges, failures, few successes, an empty bank account, a broken heart, and an overwhelming feeling of being lost and unable to find a stable job I enjoyed, I decided it was time for a major change. I reluctantly packed up my things and moved back to the cornfields and green flatlands of Ohio. Little did I know that moving back to Ohio would be a blessing—and one of the best decisions I would ever make.

FINDING A NEW PERSPECTIVE

It took awhile to recover and rediscover what I was truly passionate about and what I wanted to do with my career life. That's a whole other story in itself, so I'm going fast-forward a bit to get to the nuts and bolts of my experience going from PT to FT DJ.

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P-1800X

While I was doing my “soul searching,” I stepped back into being a part-time DJ.



Photo by Adam Benchic

I figured I could always do it as a side business, plus I honestly needed the money. In the process of applying for “real world” jobs, rediscovering my passions, my likes/dislikes, strengths/weaknesses etc., I realized that becoming an entrepreneur as a full-time DJ/MC would be extremely gratifying on many levels and I could envision where this path could take me. Thus, I trusted myself and took a leap of faith.

LESSONS LEARNED

Here are five nuggets of wisdom I have learned along the way that I feel has contributed to shaping me into a someone who could succeed full-time in the DJ business:

Researching the Market: It’s important to research the market and competitors in your area. Figure out what type of events you want to do, along with what you are going to offer and what will you charge.

Branding/Marketing: This ties into the research aspect. I feel strongly that marketing is a powerful tool, so I put A LOT of thought into how I want to brand and market myself. Even down to the style of clothes I choose to wear for events and client meetings.

I made the decision to stay solo versus going multi-op, so I had to devise a plan for how I was going to market/brand myself so as to set myself apart from others. I had to think long and hard about how to become successful as a “solopreneur.”

I wanted to give my clients that “wow” factor, along with consistency, so they know exactly what to expect when I’m hired. This stays in my mind when marketing. I also utilize a variety of the available marketing outlets i.e., social media, blogging, website (which I admit is overdue for a redesign-I will get on that before end of the year), YouTube, snazzy business cards, a press kit, online advertising, print advertising, bridal shows, etc. Not all types of marketing have

worked in my favor, but it’s a learning process and the good ol’ trial and error method rings true for any new business.

Networking: I am a networking enthusiast. When I moved back to Ohio after being gone for five years, I really didn’t know many people because I had only gone to college here and worked a couple of jobs. I had to start fresh with a blank slate. Even though I had 10 years of DJing experience, to everyone else (the venues, vendors, and clients) I was a “new DJ.” I had to break that impression and get out there and meet people. I am now a member of TBN (The Business Network) and the ToastMasters. I also will attend NACE & ISES meetings, Perfect Wedding Guide luncheons/networking mixers, eWomen Network luncheons, WIBN meetings, Chamber of Commerce or BNI meetings.

Dedication and Ambition: These two words are vitally important when transitioning from a PT DJ into a FT DJ. The word dedication means “the quality of being dedicated or committed to a task or purpose.” Ambition means “a strong desire to do or to achieve something, typically requiring determination and hard work.” With the roadblocks I’ve hit along the way, without having dedication and ambition, I would have given up already and be sulking in a corner eating Dove chocolates or working a job that I hate and just settled for. In addition, when I receive praise from a client or witness positive results from my hard work, it drives me to continue to be dedicated and ambitious.

Support System: I am surrounded with an incredible support system made up of my family, friends, mentors within the DJ industry and in life, and accountability partners. Everyone needs people who give you love, honest and open feedback, who keep you on track when you feel you may be losing your marbles, and who help you move beyond the blocks, encourage you, make you laugh, and keep you aligned. I am thankful to those who have continued to be by my side along this journey.

It’s been almost three years since I took that leap of faith. It’s a continuous learning and growing process filled with amazing successes that leave me feeling elated and grateful. In addition, there have been failures that were tough to handle and times of exhaustion when seeking out elusive solutions for overcoming some major challenges. But all of this has made me stronger and helped me continually strive to be a better business owner. It is extremely rewarding when I reflect on how I have reignited my passion and found happiness in a full-time career, where I help people celebrate special moments and leave them feeling the shine too! **MB**



Photo by Michael Delmonte

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Midweek Success: More Than Just the Money

By Marc Andrews

As a guest writer of this column I'm excited about presenting some ways that weekday events have added to my company's success. We have been able to bring in approximately 20% more income to our business due to gigs that aren't on the normal Friday-Saturday schedule. But in addition to income, there are other great reasons why you should be pursuing filling your weekday calendar!

Here are three important ways that pursuing midweek bookings can benefit your business, beyond the monetary realm:

TRAINING

This is a great opportunity for new MCs/DJs to get their feet wet with talking on the microphone, basic mixing skills, as well as overall DJing. We have found that a lot of DJs and DJ wannabe's that come to us as prospective employees often know part of the skill set, but obviously don't

have it all down right. A great way for them to hone their skills and gain valuable experience is working in front of small crowds that might even know them personally at a local town trivia gig or small corporate weekday gig. These event types are a lot more forgiving than a bride with 300 guests on her wedding day or a high school dance where 500-1000 kids are staring at you because you pressed pause instead of play.

WIRING AND SOUND

Here again, the smaller scale of the gig can help the DJ get used to dealing with their technology, by using smaller rig, and usually having a lot more time to set up the gear. Also, the reduced responsibility load helps with the learning process. The DJ also may have an opportunity to plug into a bar's sound system, or to work with them on hooking up a new sound system. These types of things are done easily when the place isn't open.

PERSONALITY AND NETWORKING

These smaller-sized midweek events are much better for a newer DJ to get out

there and meet the people at an event. We encourage our DJs to get out there and get to know them, walk around, say "Hi," and so on.

For example, on a regular trivia gig that I help out with, it's expected that you are sort of like the bartender—sitting and listening to people talk about their lives, mixing it up with friends and getting to know everyone. This also goes along with the first point on training. In providing musical entertainment, aka DJ services, the DJs main job is providing a service to the client. And working with people is the most important part of that service. Any situation that gives a DJ a chance to develop this aspect of their skill set is has a value far beyond the fee being charged.

So, if you have been hesitant to jump into the weekday game, thinking about the above opportunities for growth in your business, as well as the potential boost to your finances, may help you see the additional advantages of getting into game shows, trivia, photo booths and other services into the mix of your company's offerings. **MB**



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Keith Shocklee: a Peavey DJ from Way Back

Starting with this issue of Mobile Beat we start a new Peavey column featuring spin jocks as compared with most of the mobile DJs that we interview in the ProDJ files section of this magazine. While many of the DJs that will be covered in this column will be mobile DJs possibly at their start and/or core, it will emphasize more on their performance techniques so as to help all DJs.

Starting out with the man himself, Keith Shocklee who hooked up with Peavey in 2014 but had been working their gear since before Public Enemy back when he was a kid DJing at his youth center. But let's let Keith tell us in his own words:

Keith: Got into DJing in our youth center. It was just a way for us to get off the street. Now, there was a lot of people in Roosevelt. Now, Roosevelt is kind of a unique town. A bunch of stars came from there, but we aren't going to get into that. But my neighbor across the street decided to have this little program in the youth center, like mimicking the radio jocks that was on our radio stations in New York. There was Frankie Crocker, Gary Bird and were acting like those guys trying to do big voice and we mainly played their records. You know, it mainly was WWRL, it was the AM station, because you had WWRL, then there was WABC with guys like Chuck Lennon was on, but RL played a lot of black music. ABC was mixed, top 40.

So my neighbor, another guy Yujima at the time with Alan Prase and my brother and all of us built a little control booth where the Peavey head amp was in and -- the 450 guitar head amp and we had the column speakers. It was a booth outside and the speakers stay outside of the booth so you could hear it in the youth center. Now, the youth center, this is like '73, '74, this is where everybody came to hang out.

Back then no DJ gear really existed or was at least available to the average kid, but they had their Peavey head amp to drive things and their column speakers, a couple turntables and they were set. The word started getting out around New York, especially on Long Island and "the other youth centers around Long Island would hire us, because we were the only ones that would come in and play music for the youth center parties for kids." Now that they are starting to get the gigs, it was time to look into more hardware, and the first thing they found that they wanted was a mixer from a UK company called Meteor with their Clubman-1 mixer.

Keith: ...it was DJ formatted. Cue and a cross fade. And the cue was a big thing, because when we saw somebody cue up a record. You know, DJ Hollywood from New York put it so eloquently when he saw a DJ can hear what's playing on the next record before it came out and time it. That was like, whoa.

We mainly just played records, because we're coming out of an era of disco, funk. You know, mainly we played a lot of disco, because disco '77, '78 almost into '79 was controlling the airwaves of what we played. You know, especially I like it when it picks up.

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So this whole thing -- and you've got to understand, we're mobile DJs. This is our goal, mobile DJ. It was the shit from '70 to -- shit, man in New York, '70 to maybe '85, because by that time, the rap music really started to kick in and everybody started DJing the parties, because now we've got nightclubs that we can go hang out in that we didn't have before.

And one of the reasons why mobile DJing was big, because we took places that we couldn't get into. So we couldn't get into most of the nightclubs. So playing out in the hall and we create our own scene.

This is how the hip-hop thing started. We just created our own scene for lack of not having. You know, people don't understand, like we -- no. We didn't have shit, especially up in the Bronx. We made our own shit. We wanted to hear music and party and dance. We got down at the parks where nobody -- you know, we didn't have to pay for this shit. Just bring your sound system up, play some music, hope that nobody started fights and it was good."

Keith and his group of friends were totally into the DJing scene and started traveling extensively, and started to pull together with other people that would eventually bringing up the genesis of the urban music scene. This is where Russell Simmons of Def Jam gets into the mix, Run DMC, Beastie Boys, Fat Boys and much much more. The story of Public Enemy from that point we aren't going to cover here, but make sure to check out the full interview on the Mobile Beat Digital Edition online.

Peavey has brought on Keith Shocklee to produce DJ Gear,



starting out with the Dark Matter Speakers as announced earlier this year. While DJs have been using Peavey gear since the 1970s, and Peavey has been paying attention to what they they want more and more throughout the years. Keith is a product consultant for the entire DJ market for Peavey, and an endorsed Peavey DJ. He carries Peavey gear in both his LA and New York offices and he's doing gigs at all kinds of locations on both coasts representing Peavey. Keith is also in charge of finding new up and coming DJs, plus pulling his connections of artists from his long history in the music industry. With Keith's connections and supplying of ideas and more due to his DJ experience and those of his friends, Peavey is working on more new products to be debuted in 2016. **MB**



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Positive People Perspective

THOUGHTS ON INTERFACING WITH FELLOW PERFORMERS

By Jim Papa



Recently I was at a local networking event. The coordinator of the meeting needed a small audio system to introduce a few people and make a few announcements. She was surprised when the restaurant where the meeting was held could not provide her with what she needed. Knowing that I am a DJ she asked me if I had any sound equipment with me. I happened to have a small, old system in the car. I was more than happy to help her out.

I set up the system in a corner and left it there for her to use. Beat up and weathered, it wasn't pretty, but it worked. As the night went on people from all walks of life passed by without even noticing that it was there. Then, another DJ passed by the system. I could hear him say to his colleague, "Look at that," insinuating that the set up was amateurish at best. Not knowing that it was mine and only there because it was a last-minute stand in, they proceeded to make fun of my "insignificant" set up. The system that night was plenty powerful and regardless of its condition it was exactly what the lady needed and it got the job done.

This happens all of the time. DJs, like other profession-

als, compare themselves to their competition. With technology today, there is always something newer, faster, or better available for us to use. But even if we wanted to, we could never buy everything the industry has to offer just for the sake of having the newest, coolest items.

All of us look for an edge, but at times this can make us skeptical or lead us to act negatively towards our colleagues and their businesses. Many DJs like to critique their peers' business practices but some tend to do it only with a negative eye. They love to point out, to anyone who will listen, what they do better, rather than taking a positive approach, acknowledging what's good about their fellow DJ's ideas. It's like they need to justify that their way is best so they can fool themselves into believing that they are a success. Maybe this stems from their own lack of confidence.

Some DJs embellish their success or brag about their accomplishments. Others don't feel comfortable talking about what they do, or sharing their "trade secrets" at all. However, there is a growing number of DJs who are willing to get out there, "talk shop" with their comrades, and share their ways of doing business. Every human being, no matter how confident they are, is curious about what their peers do and how they do it.

Conventions, seminars and meetings bring DJs together to focus on one thing, their DJ business. These events are where open-minded people get together and embrace the idea of sharing with each other. You would be surprised as to how many DJs, no matter where they are from, have the same concerns and issues that you do. When these events are over most people feel that they received an education or picked up a few good pointers by attending. They often feel rejuvenated and confident as they return to their regular routines.

One thing we should all do is to respect our competition and their ways of doing business. Everyone does things a little differently. Even if we don't agree on how to do things, as professionals we should want to help each other succeed and learn to trust each other. Every once in a while a DJ has come up to me asking if I had an extra wire or cable available to borrow. I'm always happy to help them out. You may never see that DJ again but you never know when it will be you who needs help.

When you think of it, all of this may seem trivial. But the reality is we all want to be successful. Human instinct can make us paranoid while ambition can give us the drive to achieve our goals. By communicating, getting together or otherwise having relationships with other DJs, you can be assured that you are always on the right track. **MB**

*"The only true wisdom is knowing you know nothing."
~ Socrates*



A born performer, Jim Papa has been singing since age eight, and in 1996, began Magical Music Entertainment, a karaoke/ DJ entertainment business based on Long Island. In 2001 he decided to live out his dream and made Magical Music a full time venture. Since then he has entertained at hundreds of weddings, private parties, fund raisers and more. Today he sings and entertains at over two hundred events a year and has become one of the area's most requested entertainers.



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What's Old Is New Again

BLENDING ERAS AND GENRES TO MOVE DIVERSE CROWDS

By Stu Chisholm

It started last March when I arrived at the Mobile Beat show in Las Vegas. That night, the Riviera's notorious bar, Wicked Vicky's, was the scene of the "DJ Takeover," a mix-fest by DJs showing off their skills to friends, colleagues and a lot of stunned-looking tourists and regulars. The mixing, of course, was top-notch. What struck me as a bit odd, though, was the music they chose. These days, most of the DJs - perhaps all of them - are much younger than I, yet I couldn't help but notice that they were playing music that I knew!

Oh, sure, the tunes had been remixed, with fresh new rhythm tracks and sometimes a new bass line, or they might even be mashed-up with another, more current tune, but the majority of the tracks I was hearing focused on the classics. Several DJs performed that night, and aside from one who had crafted some original music, I couldn't help but notice a distinct trend. Something was up. Something I'd missed.

I quickly forgot about it later, as the excitement for the show began to build and I got involved in meeting people, reigniting cross-country friendships and seeing the sights of Vegas and the MBLV show. It wasn't until I got to the main ballroom for the show's official kick-off that I was once again led to the conclusion that something was up; DJ Jason Jani, in a stunning display of his musical virtuosity, also repeatedly mixed-in freshly reinterpreted versions of classic tunes. I'm talking 20 and 30-year-old tunes. I honestly became distracted away from the booksellers and other things going on, because all I wanted to do was rush the stage and ask him, "did you buy that or are you creating a remix on the spot? And what equipment are you using"? Lucky for both of us, the seminars began, so I was forced to restrain myself. But that wouldn't be the end of it. Oh, no...

My colleagues at Mobile Beat always go the extra mile to make the show both fun and memorable as well as educational, and this time was no exception. It was, however, exceptional! Headlining the roster of VIPs set to entertain this year were none other than DJ Jazzy Jeff and Sir Mix-A-Lot, who blew the lid off the "Legends" show at the Tropicana Hotel. Jason Jani pulled double duty, spinning tunes before and between their sets. (The man seems immune to pressure or intimidation.)

As I entered the room, I was impressed by the wide diversity of people. Naturally there were the DJs from the show, but there were also the young club-hoppers of the strip with a smattering of tourists who were in Vegas for other events. Ages ran from 21 on up to us old codgers in our 50s and beyond. When Jazzy Jeff took the stage, nobody stood still! Everyone was up dancing. Then came the moment; looking around, seeing my Canadian buddy, Jack, and

behind him was a charming young female DJ I'd met earlier that day from Texas who was in her twenties. I realized that here were all these people dancing as if it was the hippest party on the strip, and the tune playing was "I Can't Go For That (No Can Do)" by Hall & Oates. Yes, THAT one—from the '80s. Only with a slightly different rhythm track...and perhaps a bass line.

Jeff deftly mixed into other tunes, some new, but mostly older, all with a freshly re-imagined sound. It became obvious: not only was this a trend, but it was everywhere! As someone who stays current and in-touch with what's going on, this was a bit of a shock. Seems like this one slipped by me! I just had to get to the bottom of this. Those questions wouldn't stop nagging at me: were these tracks being created as I watched? Or were they prepared ahead of time, and how? Or were they simply cool remixes that anyone could buy simply being expertly mixed?

FORUM-AL INQUIRY

When I got home, I did what most of us might do when we've got questions: I hit the online forums. As I should have expected, many DJs were reluctant to talk about their mixes, what they're doing and how they're doing it, but I did manage to dislodge a few nuggets of wisdom, useful tips and insights into this trend. The most repeated comment I heard was, "I want to keep my audience guessing. I don't want to sound like everyone else". Most of the DJs were like me in the sense that they don't like to spin the work of other DJs in their mixes, but occasionally that work is so outstanding that they will make an exception. The name that kept jumping out at me was "Voicedude."

Voicedude is a mashup artist from California named Joel Stevens. Along with his great mashups, he produces a podcast. He distributes his mashups via Hearthis, SoundCloud and MixCloud, and you can learn more about his work at his website: <http://voicedude.podomatic.com/>

Several other names were dropped, my personal favorites being DJ Earworm and John Liechty, who simply goes by "DJ John". Earworm (<http://dyearworm.com/>) is best known for his annual "United State of Pop" mashups, and DJ John first caught my ear with a stunning treatment of the Andrews Sisters in his mashup, "Rockin' Down the House with Rum & Coca-Cola". You



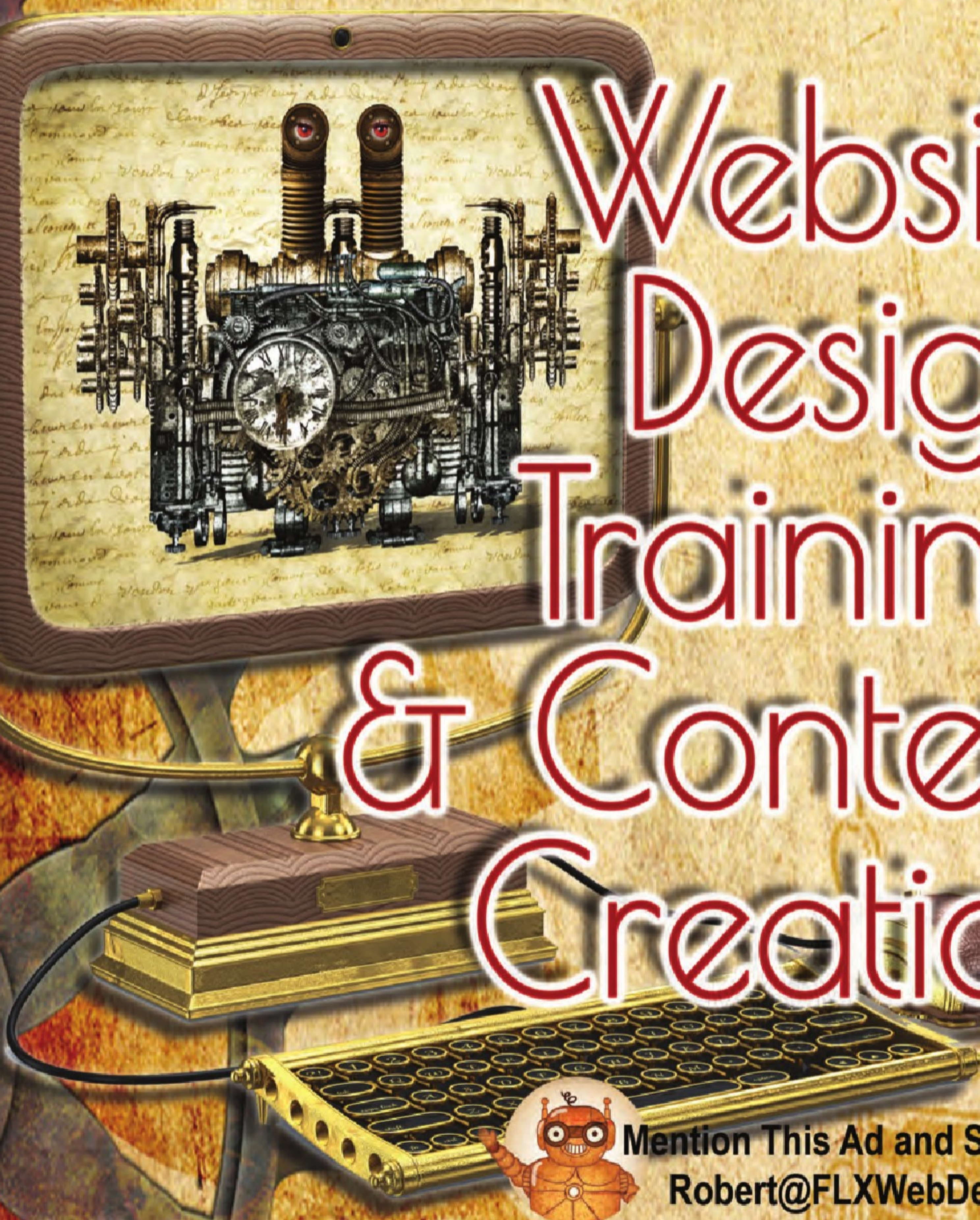
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can hear that and many of his other tracks at <http://www.last.fm/music/DJ+John+Liechty/+tracks>. Sadly, his own web page, DJJohn.com, seems to be MIA as of this writing.

TO THE SOURCE: CHITOWN SHANI

Finding the forums frustrating, many of the DJs there reluctant to talk, I thought I'd go right to the source of my questions. The DJ I was most impressed with at the DJ Takeover also happened to be the host/emcee and the only female DJ in the bunch: "Chitown" Shani Barnett. As her moniker implies, she's a Chicago gal who puts that style that only a Chicagoan can bring into her mix, and her mix is like nobody else's, the only connecting thread being this infusion of older, classic/retro style music. She was kind enough to give me a large part of a particularly busy Monday to answer my questions.

Shani doesn't see it as anything unusual or trendy. "It depends on what area you cater to." Yet for your average wedding or top-40 club, it just seems logical. "Younger people are into what their parents are listening to," she says. This makes sense, as younger people are also living at home with their parents a lot longer than they used to. Plus, as every working mobile DJ knows, we use a lot of tunes some refer to as "evergreens".

As for her own style, she reiterates, "I don't play the normal radio versions. I'm not really 'producing' on-the-fly; it's all mixing. Sometimes I'll do an a cappella over something else... but it's always mixing." She goes on to explain that she is into several different music pools/services, so she gets regular updates and many different remixes of all the newest music. "I get everything! A lot [of my tracks] are out-of-the-box remixes, but I kinda switch it up for people. I love playing the mashups".

I asked Shani about her gear and production. "I'm a Serato DJ. I'm not really into production; I don't play around with Ableton. My mixes are all done live." She concludes with some words that I think are wise beyond her years: "But it's not about playing music. It's more about taking people on a musical journey". Talking about the complainers on the forums, she muses, If you're not happy [being a DJ], then you're in the wrong profession."

THE MAN AT CENTER-STAGE: JASON JANI

It also seemed obvious that I had to talk to "the man" at the center stage of MBLV, the aforementioned Jason Jani. He was also kind enough to indulge me with his own comments on the topic. "There are lots of ways [I mix these tracks]," he begins. "Playing pre-produced edits... producing live... I know a lot of DJs who produce tracks live." Like Shani, Jason says of his style: "I like to be unpredictable," adding, "I also like to go with what's happening, like when Carr Hagerman talked about the Ramones when he introduced Penn [Jillette]. I had a Ramones track playing when he walked out". Indeed! Like everyone who was there, I thought that had been rehearsed.

Getting back to the music, Jani muses that "Most DJs are



playing mashups and remixes. Some is done live, but I did a lot of my own mashups. That whole intro segment [at MBLV] was something I produced". This naturally made me ask what he's using. "I use Serato and a Rane 62 mixing board. At the show I was using [Pioneer] CDJ 900s, but I generally prefer the 2000s. For the super complex stuff, I produce tracks ahead of time. I use Ableton... I used to use Acid... and I work on my craft every day".

So IS something up? "I don't think it's a trend as much as a nightlife influence. People like a combination of everything, like [at the] Jazzy Jeff [performance]".

INCONCLUSIVE CONCLUSION

As with any topic, there are about as many opinions on this trend as there are DJs! So is this a trend? Yes and no. I am led to believe that, while it may depend on the nature of the venue and audience, it has undeniably caught fire among the more creative, high-profile DJs and the general public is eating it up! How are they doing it? Some spin remixes they buy. Some spin tracks they produce. Some cobble together special mixes on-the-fly. And the most adventurous do all of it. The good news is that even the best DJs might only fit into one or two of these slots! You don't have to be an Ableton wizard to creatively rock your party, and even those wizards aren't adverse to downloading a particularly great remix or mashup for their own sets.

To me, this trend harkens back to the '90s when Swing music enjoyed a brief resurgence. Grandfathers tossed around their granddaughters at weddings to Brian Setzer or the Squirrel Nut Zippers, and young couples took lessons to learn the Lindy Hop. Unlike Swing, this trend looks like it has legs; it shows no sign of slowing down. In fact, the remixes are only getting more and more audacious and creative -- and inspiring! I'm now reinventing my production computer, which will be equipped with Ableton software, to unlock those remixes and mashups that, for now, live only in my head.

On a sidenote, Jason Jani will once again be at MBLV at the Tropicana next March, not only to perform, but serving as the Entertainment Director! It promises to be THE not-to-be-missed show of 2016, and who knows what new trends will turn up there? Until next time, safe spinnin'! **MB**



Stu Chisholm had been collecting music since he was about age 8 and began his DJ career in 1979. After a stint at the Specs Howard School of Broadcast Arts, he studied the DJ arts with famous Michigan broadcaster Bill Henning, interned at Detroit's rock powerhouse, WRIF, and later added voiceover work and club gigs at Detroit's best venues. He has shared his extensive DJ experience through MB columns, as a seminar speaker and through his book, *The Complete Disc Jockey: A Comprehensive Manual for the Professional DJ*.

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2	BRING EM OUT	T.I.
3	SIGNED, SEALED, DELIVERED	STEVIE WONDER
4	BEST DAY OF MY LIFE	AMERICAN AUTHORS
5	PARTY ROCK ANTHEM	LMFAO
6	I GOTTA FEELING	BALCK EYED PEAS
7	MARRY YOU	BRUNO MARS
8	CRAZY IN LOVE	BEYONCE
9	SAY HEY (I LOVE YOU)	MICHAEL FRANTI
10	GET READY FOR THIS	JOCK JAMS

LAST DANCE

1	DON'T STOP BELIEVING	JOURNEY
2	ALL OF ME	JOHN LEGEND
3	WONDERFUL TONIGHT	ERIC CLAPTON
4	TIME OF MY LIFE	DIRTY DANCING
5	AT LAST	ETTA JAMES
6	COME AWAY WITH ME	NORAH JONES
7	SAVE THE LAST DANCE FOR ME	MICHAEL BUBLE
8	LAST DANCE	DONNA SUMMER
9	THINKING OUT LOUD	ED SHEERAN
10	HOME	EDWARD SHARPE

EXIT

1	SEND ME ON MY WAY	RUSTED ROOT
2	CLOSING TIME	SEMISONIC
3	WOULD YOU GO WITH ME	JOSH TURNER
4	WAY YOU LOOK TONIGHT	FRANK SINATRA
5	FIREWORK	KATY PERRY
6	THIS WILL BE (AN EVERLASTING LOVE)	NATALIE COLE
7	DON'T STOP BELIEVING	JOURNEY
8	SIGNED, SEALED, DELIVERED	STEVIE WONDER
9	TIME OF YOUR LIFE	GREEN DAY
10	BEST IS YET TO COME	FRANK SINATRA

By Jay Maxwell

People are important. Although this may seem like an obvious statement, it is a concept that many individuals either forget or fail to show through their actions.

All through my career as a college professor, my office desk has been arranged in such a way that I face the door. With this arrangement, the minute a student arrives I am able to stand, greet them with a smile, and shake hands. Yes, I shake my students' hands when they arrive in my office. Beyond making students feel welcomed, I want them to feel important. Too many times a student has entered my office with an apologetic statement about not wanting to "bother" me, whereby I immediately tell them how grateful I am that they cared enough to come to my office with their questions.

Interestingly, some of my own colleagues place their desks so that their backs are always turned to whoever is entering their office. At times, when I enter their offices, even after my initial greeting, their backs are still turned to me and they hesitate to make eye contact as I ask them my question—which can make me feel unimportant.

Let's take this same idea to the arena of the mobile DJ performing at an event. Of course no one would think to set up the equipment so that their back is to the audience. So, how does a mobile DJ make a great first impression on all guests collectively, as well as, exude a welcoming aura when someone approaches with a song request?

For starters, never sit down. From the moment the first guest walks into the room, the DJ should be standing behind the console. By standing, the impression is given that the DJ is alert, on standby, and ready to engage the party.

When people think about smiling, the first thought is to turn a frown upside down. There is much truth in that statement, but that's only the start. A genuine smile extends beyond the lips to the eyes. A sparkle exists in the eyes of someone who is smiling. In addition, one's posture is erect portraying someone with confidence and shows that he is happy and ready to serve.

A smile is also heard in one's voice. For a wedding reception, the first time a DJ typically speaks is when he or she gets everyone's attention to announce the wedding party. The music underneath the introductions is upbeat, matching the enthusiasm of the announcer's dynamic opening lines. Instead of a rote litany of names, the disc jockey will add a touch of personality prior to each pair of names called, such as "Here comes a couple guaranteed to add life to the party." The introduction music should

be discussed with the bride and groom during the consultation; however, if they want some suggestions, please refer to this issue's list.

Keeping the energy level up and the dance floor packed is the forte of any outstanding disc jockey. Keeping the "party train" on the tracks and rolling steadily is the goal at every event. Of course, the challenge is getting enough steam in the train to get the momentum started in the first place. Much of the effort is finding the right songs to start the event to please the crowd. The other equally important factor in starting a party resides in the DJ's attitude and outward expressions, both in body language and vocal enthusiasm.

Regardless of how much fun people are having at the party, eventually it comes time to announce the final song for the evening. There are two schools of thought on what the best choice is for a last dance, either a slow song to wind down the evening or a popular dance song to pack the dance floor so people can jam one final time. Once again, this is a personal choice of the client so it is highly recommended to consult with them as to their preference. If the client does want a slow song, but they do not know what to choose, we advise them to select the song that came in second place when they were choosing their



Mobile Beat's resident musicologist since 1992 (issue #11), Jay Maxwell runs the multi-talent entertainment company, Jay Maxwell's Music by Request, LLC, in Charleston, South Carolina. He is also a professor of Business at Charleston Southern University. His passion for detail and continuous research of clients' requests can be found not only in this column, but also in his annually updated music guide, **Play Something We Can Dance To.**

first dance. If they are completely stumped for a great last dance, we refer them to our last dance selections (see list). If a couple cannot decide between a slow song and a fast song for a last dance, as a compromise, we suggest a slow song as a last announced dance, followed by an encore fast dance selection to get people to kick their heels up

one final time before grabbing their jackets to call it a night. If there is to be a send-off with sparklers, bubbles or the like, then another song is played as a departure song. Once again, this is a song that the couple should help to choose.

There is so much more that a disc jockey does besides play music between the first dance and the last dance. We did not address all the planning before the event to ensure all the music the client wants is readily available and only the edited versions get played. A large factor in a successful party is how the disc jockey looks, acts, and personifies the concept of fun.

Remember that people are important. Every event is about people having a memorable time. The disc jockey plays a critical role in bringing life to the party. It should be music to a DJ's ears when a guest walks up and asks him to "Play Something We Can Dance To." **MB**

A large advertisement for Full Compass. On the left, a man with a beard and sunglasses, wearing a green and white patterned shirt, is shown from the chest up, looking upwards with an open mouth as if singing or shouting. To his right is a large, reflective disco ball. The background is dark. The text "THE LIFE OF THE PARTY" is written in large, green, sans-serif capital letters. Below it, in a smaller green font, is "Starts with the Highest Quality Gear". At the bottom left is the Full Compass logo, which consists of a purple rounded rectangle with a white circle and the words "FULL COMPASS" in white. To the right of the logo, the text "Call 800-356-5844" and "Shop fullcompass.com" is displayed. At the very bottom, in white, is "Pro Audio • Video • Lighting • Musical Instruments".

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A Piece of His Heart

BERT BERNS: DRIVEN SONGWRITER AND PRODUCER OF CLASSIC, EMOTIVE HITS

By Mike Ficher

When great producers of 1960's pop music are reviewed, names such as Jerry Wexler (Aretha Franklin), George Martin (The Beatles), Lou Adler (The Mamas and the Papas), Phil Spector (The Wall of Sound), and Holland-Dozier-Holland (The Supremes, The Four Tops) quickly and rightfully enter the discussion. Rarely, do you hear the name Bert Berns.



When great songwriters of the 1960s are offered, Bert Berns is usually absent. Who?

"Bert Berns is one of the great untold stories of rock and roll," wrote Ben Fong-Torres in *Rolling Stone*.

"The white king of soul music," proclaimed Al Kooper.

"A master of symphonic soul, of the uptown New York sound that combined cascading orchestration with drenching gospel vocals," praised Barney Hoskyns in

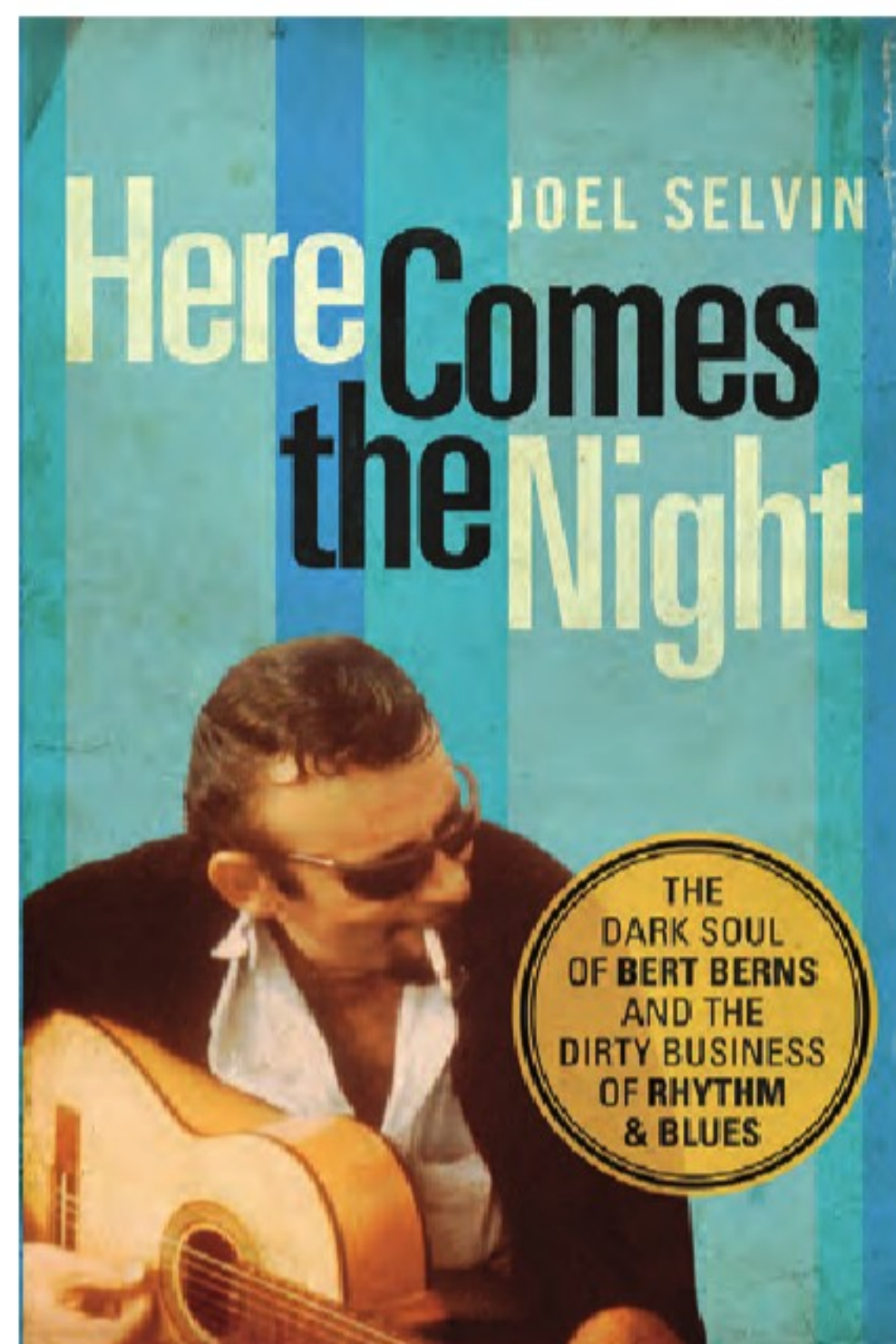
Mojo magazine.

"A clear-eyed music visionary who created some of the most honest and powerful music of his generation – the lost pioneer of Sixties rock and soul," waxed Doug Morris, the current head of Sony Music who was an assistant to Berns in the early 1960's.

Berns produced such legendary recordings as the mobile entertainment staple, Van Morrison's 'Brown-Eyed Girl' and 'Baby Please Don't Go,' Solomon Burke's 'Cry to Me,' the Drifters' 'Under The Boardwalk,' and Barbara Lewis' 'Baby I'm Yours.' He wrote the party standard 'Twist and Shout,' 'Piece Of My Heart,' 'Hang On Sloopy,' 'I Want Candy,' 'Everybody Needs Somebody To Love,' 'Cry To Me,' 'Cry Baby,' 'Here Comes The Night,' and 'Tell Him' amongst dozens of hits and non-charting classics.

Berns was not only an exceptional record producer—fifty-one pop chart singles including nineteen in 1964, the same year the Beatles and the British Invasion conquered the United States charts—he was a prolific and highly successful songwriter, a charismatic label founder and head and an impassioned singer. What is amazing is the man dubbed Mr. Success carved out a stunning yet too often overlooked legacy in just seven years in the business—long after he was projected to no longer even be on the planet.

Berns was diagnosed with rheumatic fever, which caused damage to his heart, at the age of 14. According to Joel Selvin, longtime pop music critic and journalist who wrote a



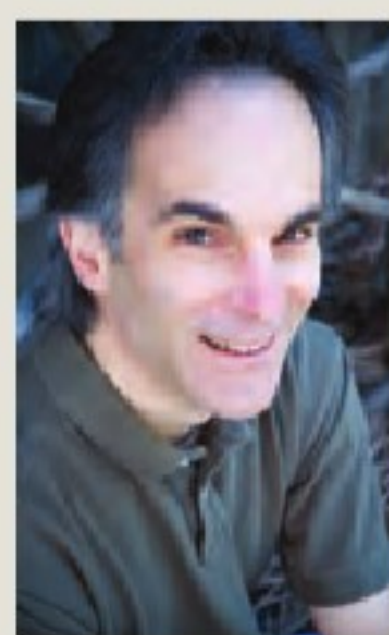
biography of Berns, *Here Comes the Night*, "At that time, in the 1940s, long before open heart surgery, such a disease was a death sentence."

After the diagnosis, Berns, who studied classical piano, played guitar and could read and write music, dropped out of school and bounced around New York for years. In the 1950's, with the mambo craze white hot in The Big Apple, the romantic attraction compelling and not much else to do, Berns headed south.

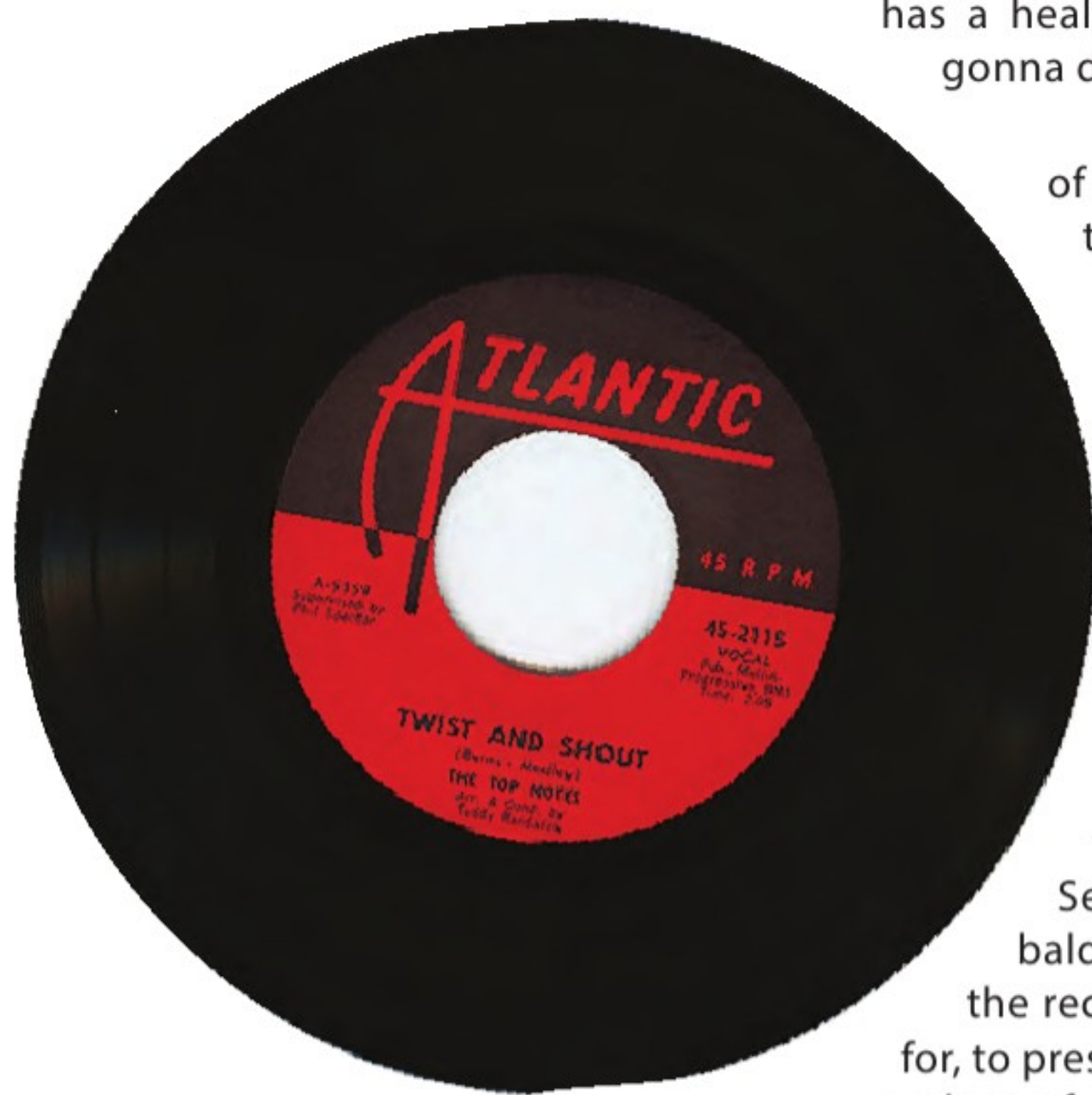
"Moving to Cuba changed Berns life," said Selvin. He ran guns for Castro, turned a warehouse into a nightclub and, most critically, fell under the enchanting spell of the rhythms of the Caribbean island.

"That was a galvanizing experience for him that got him to realize that he wanted to be not just a composer or songwriter but that he wanted to write songs that had this Cuban undercurrent."

Berns returned to the United States and at the age of 30—nine years later than he was projected to live—with only a guitar, a satchel of songs, and a dogged determination to succeed in the music business, gained a position as a song plugger for Robert Melon Music Publishing in New York. He brought Cuba with him.



A business analyst by day, Mike Ficher is an actor, voice artist, MC, sportscaster, public address announcer and former mobile entertainer. He is also the host of the weekly syndicated radio program, *The Ultimate Oldies Show*. Mike synthesizes these varied experiences to illuminate historic connectivity and fresh perspectives on the mobile entertainment profession. More info at www.mikeficher.com.



"All his favorite songs are based on the same chord progression, drawn from one of his favorite songs, 'La Bamba.' It's also the same chord progression you will find in the Cuban national anthem, 'Guantanamera.' The bass line is actually identical in the two songs.

"So Berns made that bass line into 'Twist and Shout,' 'Hang on Sloopy,' 'Piece of My Heart.'"

He scored his first hit with the Jarmels' 'A Little Bit of Soap' in 1961 and followed that with the Exciters' 'Tell Him.'

While Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller—who Berns succeeded as a staff producer at Atlantic in 1963—had a number of Latin-flavored hits with the Drifters, Selvin cites the difference between the teachers and the student.

"With the Drifters, Leiber and Stoller were drawing more from Brazilian music, a samba-type thing. The Afro-Cuban music Berns was drawing from was more sensual, more fiery, more aggressive. He really introduced the whole concept of the Afro-Cuban rhythmic content to the history of rock'n'roll."

The recordings were also more dark, more exigent, more urgent.

"The flaw in his heart, this hole in his heart was I think the single most important factor in his life. You can feel that reflected in the songs he wrote," offered Selvin.

"Certainly, for Berns to write a song, where he's gonna take another little piece of my heart, it certainly means something entirely different than for somebody who

has a healthy heart. Here's a guy who's gonna die young."

That accelerated pace of life, of jamming as much into as little time as possible extended to his singers.

"You don't just sing Bert Berns' songs," offered Ben E. King. "You have to feel them."

"Berns liked to take his vocalists to the edge of heartbreak, right at the abyss of desperation, where you can feel them just on the verge of letting go," said Selvin. "That moment was so bald, so naked, and so exposed in the record. That was what he looking for, to press that song and the singer into a place of emotional desperation. In that regard, I would say his intent was kind of operatic."

And timeless.

"The reason that records last through the ages the way Berns' records do has to do with the kind of integrity with which they're made. You can't make a record with an eye on the contemporary chart, what sounds hot right now. If you tie

your records to something as evanescence as contemporary charts, they will sound old in six months. Berns' records are classic. They were voiced in a way that had nothing to do with what else was on the charts.

"They had to do with what he thought the songs should sound like when they were recorded. He had a very deeply personal vision of this kind of rhythm and blues, this cubano influence. He was heavy on voices, he liked the background choirs. The integrity of that has made them last through the years."

Why Bert Berns is not in the Songwriters' Hall of Fame or the Rock Hall of Fame or known more widely in pop music is better left answered by the keepers of those flames. Listeners and the music business know about this captivating, fascinating and legendary figure.

"Bert deserves to be elevated to his rightful place in the music industry," noted Sir Paul McCartney.

"He is truly the lost titan of the American music business, an important figure the world knows little about," said Morris. "It's long past time his brilliance was recognized." **MB**

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Billboard: Charting the Hits for 75 Years

CHAT WITH A CHART CHIEF

By Mike Ryan

Billboard Magazine was first published in late 1800s covering circuses, carnivals, amusement parks, fairs, vaudeville, minstrels, whale shows and other live entertainment. It started covering motion pictures in 1909 and radio in the 1920s. With the introduction of the jukebox industry in the 1930s *Billboard* began publishing best-selling sheet music and top vaudeville theaters songs. *Billboard's* first record chart was "calculated" in 1940. Originally, there were only three charts: Pop, Rhythm & Blues, and Country & Western. *Billboard* introduced the *Billboard* 200 albums in 1956 "tally" and two years later, the *Billboard* Hot 100 songs survey, both remain two of *Billboard's* signature charts.

In 2005, the magazine and its web sites started covering all forms of digital and mobile entertainment.

Today, *Billboard's* approximately 250 charts are updated weekly and cover sales, radio airplay, streaming and social activity. They are directed to for music industry professionals, record label executives, artists, music retailers, and radio (and mobile) DJs, as well as music fans worldwide. *Billboard.com* is the consumer-centered site, and includes artist interviews, daily news and all of the charts.

The following interview is with Gary

Trust, co-director of *Billboard* Charts.

M B: *Billboard's* Editor-In-Chief, Tony Gervino, once said "predicting chart success is an impossible science". You must employ some crazy algorithms to evaluate the hits. Can you give us a peak into that process?

G T: Part of the fun of the charts is not knowing what might jump to No. 1 in any given week. It keeps an element of surprise to the process. We work with our data partners at Nielsen Music, with some charts based on sales, others on airplay, streaming or social reaction, and some employing various combinations; the *Billboard* Hot 100, for instance, is a blend of sales, airplay and streaming data. And, the charts evolve.

M B: My friend, Radio Hall of fame DJ and Program Director John Lander who actually worked with you in Boston on CBS, found out I was doing this interview and wanted me to ask you: "How does *Billboard* base chart position every week - what percent is sales vs. airplay (# of spins) downloads etc. and how do they arrive at each week's position, is it 50/50 60/40 or?"

G T: As the Hot 100 uses a formula blending sales, airplay and streaming, the songs in a given week often average out to a third of each metric. But, certain songs excel in certain areas more than others. A monster hit, like The Weeknd's "Can't Feel My Face," will often sport a roughly equal mix, excelling in all three parameters, while other songs do noticeably better in one or two. Several rap hits this year, for example, have been driven mostly by viral activity online, so songs by rappers like Silento and Fetty Wap have boasted higher numbers in streaming than sales or airplay.

With about 250 weekly charts, we're pretty busy. Especially on Mondays, when the *Billboard* charts department produces almost all charts, in that one day. It's like our Sunday if we were football players. We're clearly not suited to be football players, but hopefully you get the idea.

(Along with being a talented DJ and PD, John Lander hosted "John Lander's Hit Music USA, a syndicated weekly radio show of hits and humour from 1985 to 1991. He was my PD at KGB. -M.R.)

M B: With all of your accumulated experience charting songs at *Billboard*



you must be pretty good at spotting future hits. Are there certain elements of songs that catch your attention?

G T: I think anyone in the music industry likes to think that he or she can predict a song that has a good chance to become a hit early on. Of course, it's easy to guess that, say; a single from a superstar like Taylor Swift will become big. It's more a point of pride when you champion an eventual left-field hit like OMI's "Cheerleader."

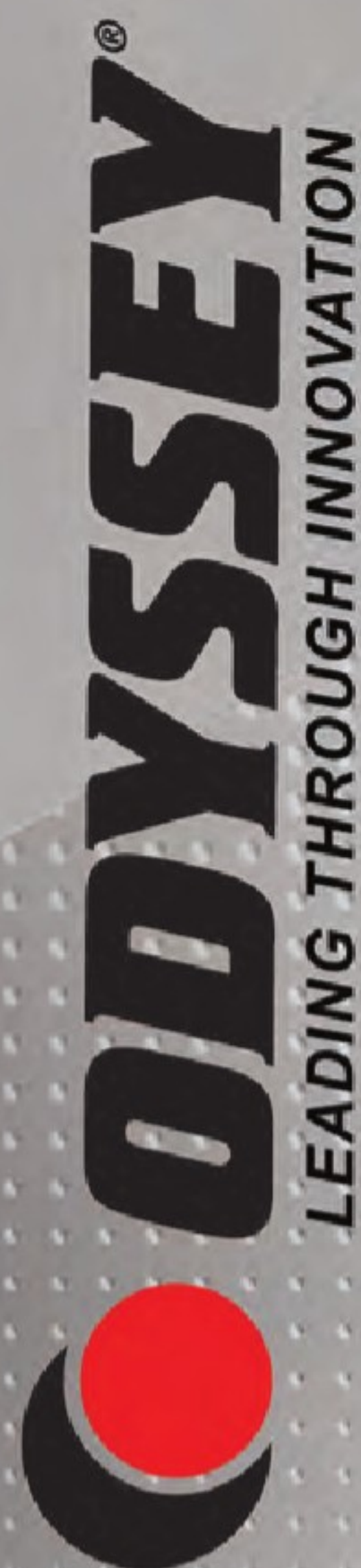
M B: Recently there have been several format changes to your magazine. I noticed that you stopped including charts from Asia and Europe. Personally I liked seeing what the rest of the world is listening to. Where did they go and where are the rest of the charts?

G T: All *Billboard* charts, in their entirety, are available to subscribers (online) at www.Billboard.com/biz. That includes our menu of worldwide charts, from Europe, Asia, Canada and beyond. Other charts, like the Hot 100 and *Billboard* 200, plus the newer Artist 100 chart, a weekly ranking of top acts based on a variety of factors, are shown in full for free on www.Billboard.com. In the magazine, we highlight as many charts as we can, along with chart analysis.

Billboard has also moved the Hot 100 up to the front of the magazine, often on page 1, for the first time in its history, so I, and hopefully all chart fans, love that that's what readers see first each week. Everyone should, of course, keep reading the rest of the



Mike Ryan started out writing for news radio, and has been a DJ in the SoCal radio market on KGB and KSDS. He mobiles as Mike on the Mike. He is also the inventor/owner of Frankenstand Powered Speaker Stands.

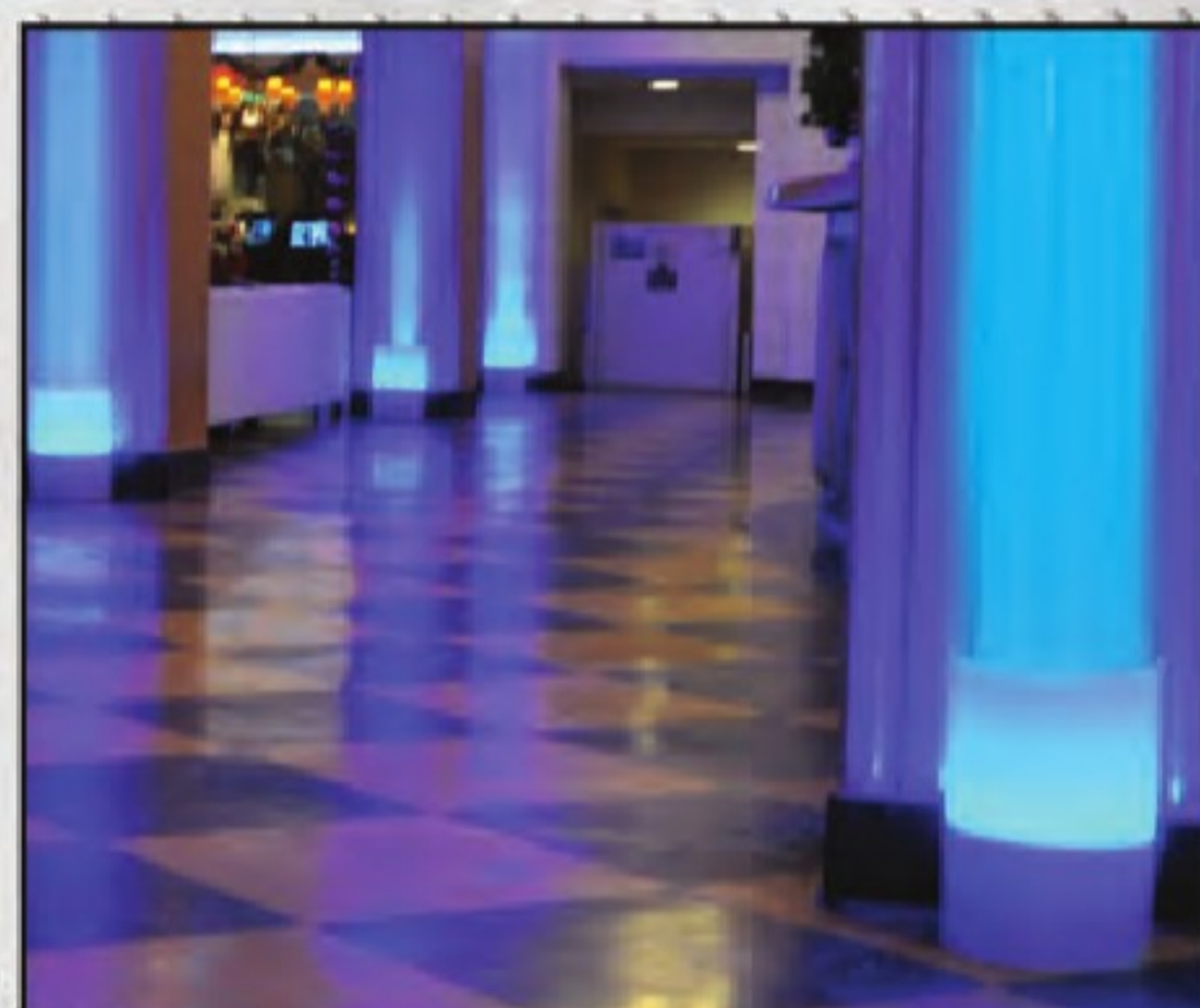
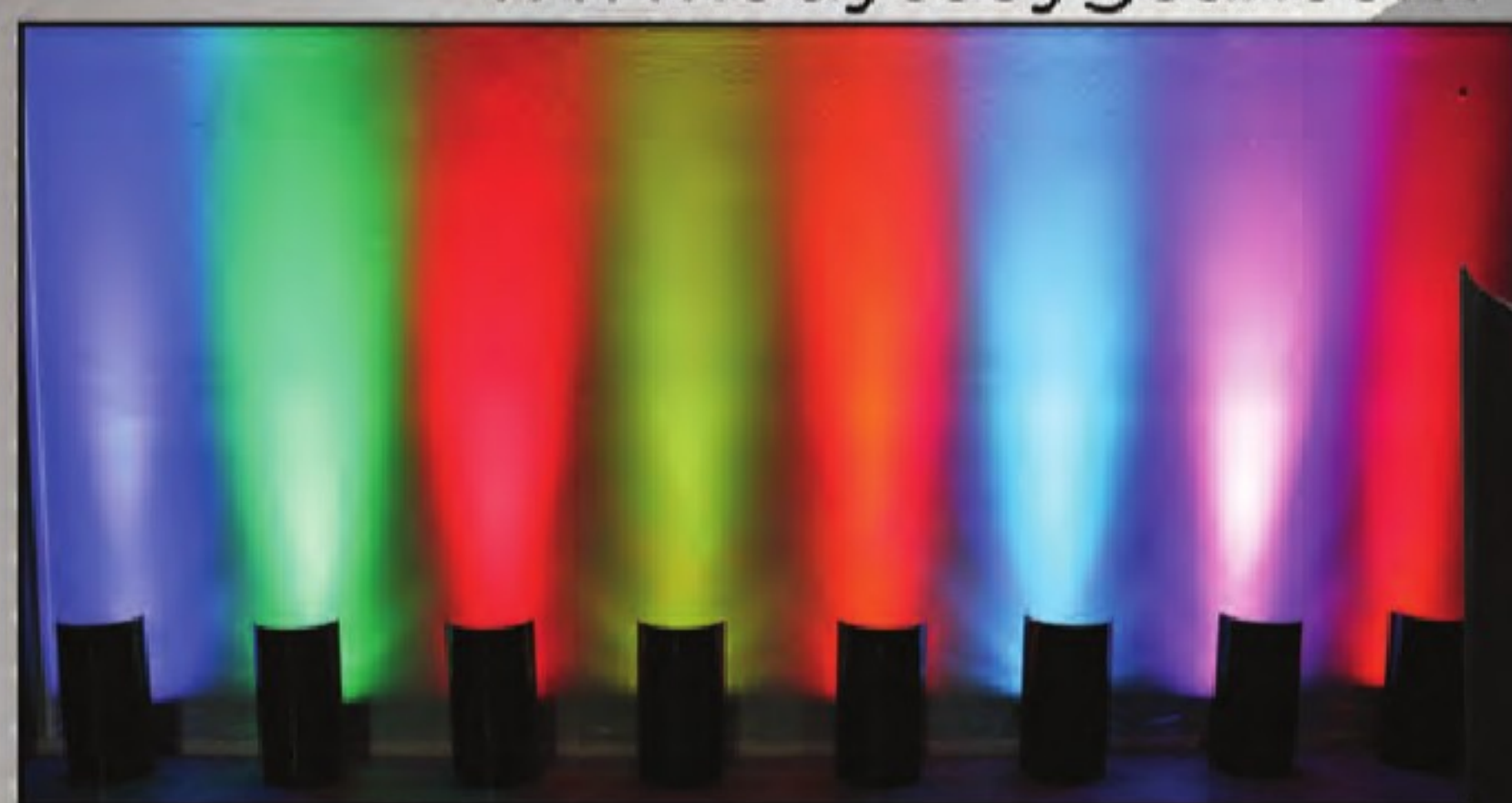


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magazine! There's so much to learn about the music business, touring and industry trends, along with artist features, reviews and more, plus exclusive art from *Billboard*'s extremely talented photo and creative departments.

Beyond the magazine and website, *Billboard* has extended its reach with numerous events, including, and perhaps most notably, the annual *Billboard* Music Awards on ABC."

M B: *Billboard* uses digital download sales, radio airplay, and internet streaming to track song movement. I can understand tracking digital downloads and internet streaming but doesn't radio actually follow *Billboard* charts? How does that work, and in your opinion with so many music sources available to the masses is Radio even really a viable reflection of hot hits anymore?

G T: ...the charts can work both ways: radio, and consumers, can see what's

on the charts and make decisions based those ranks. At the same time, songs have to build up enough momentum to reach charts in the first place, so someone has to take the lead for that to happen.

Before I joined *Billboard* (in 2006), I worked in radio for 14 years and love the medium. It's survived all kinds of competition for about a century, and I hope its unique offering of live companionship keeps it thriving going forward. According to a recent Nielsen study, 91 percent of all Americans 12 or older, or 243 million, listen to radio weekly, so it's still incredibly vital.

M B: Regarding music on television commercials, it's safe to say that nothing is left to chance in those spots including music. A lot of research and money goes into picking those songs and they often become big hits. Train's "Hey Soul Sister" comes to mind. Do you agree commercial music can be a bellweth-

er of future hits and why?

G T: Absolutely! It's another way for songs to gain attention. iTunes spots became well-known for spotlighting songs that became hits, while right now, X Ambassadors' "Renegades" has become a top 40 Hot 100 hit after first finding exposure in a Jeep ad campaign. TV shows like HBO's *Girls* have also taken pride in new music discovery (i.e., Icona Pop's "I Love It.") Ultimately, listeners will decide if a song becomes a hit or not, but artists and labels have smartly become more entrepreneurial about synchs, and it's often resulting in hits.

M B: In the past few years we've seen a dominance of women artist who, as your magazine states, have "outfoxed stale masculine postures". You must keep track of trends like this. What happened here and what other trends in music does your crystal ball predict?

G T: We have fun tracking trends like

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this. Last year, women set a record by blocking men from the Hot 100's top spot for 19 consecutive weeks. Then, this year ... only one song by a woman (surprise, it's by Taylor Swift! "Bad Blood") has hit No. 1. So, after women dominated the chart in 2014, men have gotten their revenge in 2015. So many trends are cyclical and there's logic that, in this case, if several superstar women release hit albums one year, they might not the next, giving men a chance to reclaim their spots atop the charts. Other trends are more long-lasting, like how, in the '50s, rock became established. Or, much more recently, how EDM has become so mainstream.

M B: It must be an honor working for one of the oldest industry trade magazines in the world. How did you get into the music charting business and what is it like working for and in an industry that monitors the glitz and glamour of show business?

GT: Like many chart fans, I became fas-

cinated with *Billboard* charts by listening to American Top 40, when I was 14. I loved all the count-downs and weekend specialty shows and hosts – Casey Kasem, Shadō Stevens, Joel Denver, Bob Kingsley and more. Then, I found out that many shows were based on *Billboard* charts and I was hooked on *Billboard*

(DJ Casey Kasem hosted the American Top 40 radio show from 1970 until 1988 playing the top 40 songs from *Billboard*'s Hot 100 chart in reverse order.)

I think following charts is like following sports—we like to see who's winning, and if our personal favorites are. Music is, ultimately, about the enjoyment of listening, but it is a business, too, and the charts are the best way to keep track of the



action.

And, it's certainly an honor to work at *Billboard*. I consider it almost like holding a public office, if not quite on the same level of civic magnitude. People love to read *Billboard* charts around the world, and have for decades, so it's so gratifying to help move that process along each week, as well as follow in the great tradition of those who have

done so for *Billboard* previously."

Combining Mobile Beat's coverage of everything Mobile DJ and with *Billboard*'s weekly charts any professional Mobile DJ should be set to entertain their guests with the most up to date trends, equipment and music. Sounds like a hit to me. **MB**

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Mobile Photo Booth: Reloaded

KICKING A PHOTOBOOTH TECHNOLOGY BACK INTO HIGH GEAR

By Ryan Burger

Welcome to Mobile Beat's new focus on photo booths and what they can do for your company's bottom line.

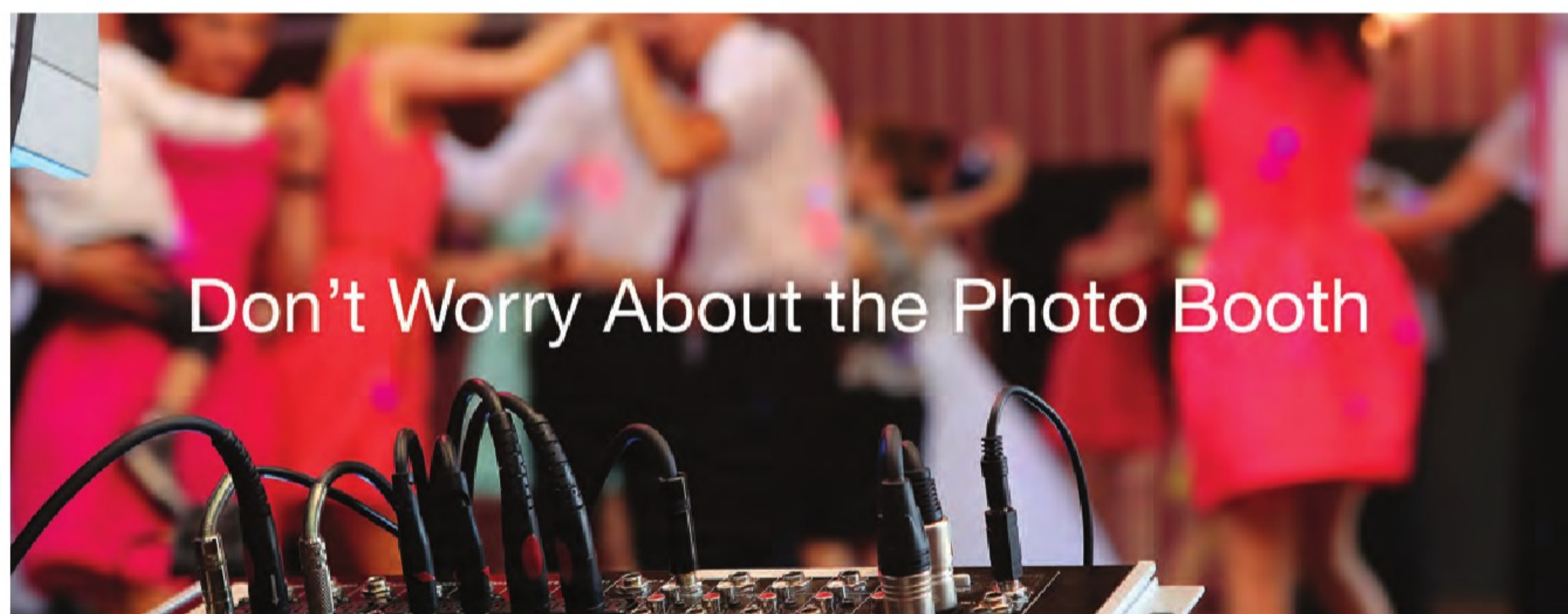
We are timing this kick-off to dovetail with some things happening both locally and nationally. Locally, for our DJ production company, BCP Live Inc., which I own with my partner Jake Feldman, we are remodeling the photo booths we bought from Open Air Photo Booths (openairphotobooth.com) nearly eight years ago.

Nationally, our coverage of all things photo booth anticipates two upcoming trade events that offer hands-on interaction with the many of the best booth technology companies: MBLV20 (March 14-17, 2016, mobilebeatlasvegas.com) and the Photo Booth Expo (April 11-13, 2016, thephoto-boothexpo.com), also in Las Vegas.

We bought two units, seven and eight years ago respectively, when Open Air was the first to hit our industry with portable

booths for wedding pros. The investment was around \$6,000 per booth. Since we were among the first in the area to have such hardware, we broke even in only 9-10 months. With an average booking of around \$750 at the time, and employee and printer consumable costs of \$250 or less, we simply had to complete 12 events to pay off each unit. Since then, all we have done is buy a camera or two to replace damaged ones, and keep up on props and supplies. Now that's a truly fantastic return on investment! Currently our photo booths go out for an average of \$600 per event because the market has been saturated with low priced competitors.

Last year we realized that it was time to transition our booths to new computers and do some overall cleanup on them. It took a while to get around to doing the work, and now that it's done, I wish I had done it much sooner. The primary issue was that it was taking too long to prep the booths and on-site operation was sluggish. This was because the computers in the units were



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aging and the software was still basically the first generation written for photo booth use.

The first step was to acquire new computers. We chose Shuttle Computers (for about \$1,000 each), which are available from many different computer dealers and are marketed in the DJ industry by EZ Photo Booths (ezphotobooths.com), among others. This is an all-in-one touch screen machine powered by a dual core processor and has plenty of power to do what we need it to do. While it came with photo booth software preloaded, we decided we wanted to try an outside program that had more functionality. Following this article is a review of this product, Dark Room Booth 2 from Dark Room Software.

We were able to keep the same printers and cameras, and we only had to make minor alterations to the Open Air cases to accomodate the new computers. We were able to build a mount to put the computer in place by just making some minor changes to the bezel portion of the case, and then we secured all the cables tightly inside the

case. This is key to making the booth truly mobile, by making sure it can handle being transported, and also makes setup and maintenance easier. On the two booths I was remodeling at the time, it only took me an extra 20 minutes to do this right, and it will be well worth the time invested in prevention of future headaches.

And because the computers were touch screen models we no longer needed keyboards and mice for normal photo booth operations. (But you should have the keyboard and mouse available when working on configuration, driver updates, etc.)

When it comes down to it, if your booths are five years old or older, it's time to do some remodeling like what's described here. Of course, it also may be time to invest in a new unit. Or maybe you are ready to take your first leap into this market, which has stabilized into a reliable money-maker for mobile DJs to offer. In an upcoming article we will be looking at features and other things to consider when buying a new photo booth for your company. See you next time! **MB**



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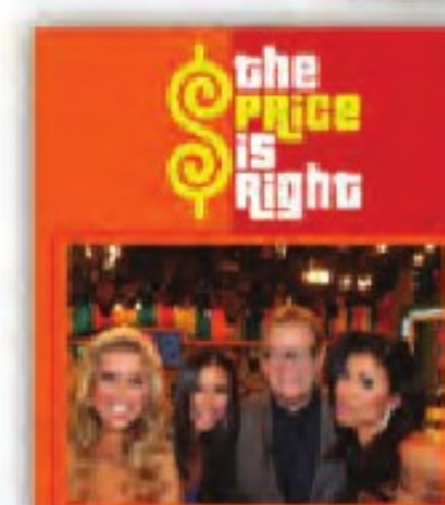
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Reviewed: Darkroom Booth 2

HIGH-POWERED PHOTO BOOTH FUNCTIONALITY

By Ryan Burger

The biggest part of the photo booth remodel detailed above in "Mobile Photo Booth: Reloaded" was the computer upgrade. We also decided to go with some more powerful software, so we installed Darkroom Booth 2 on the new computers. This new version was just released last summer by Darkroom Software.

Installation was a breeze and we were able to get each machine configured the way we wanted in about 30 minutes. We

were able to customize the standard photo strip look that we use for most weddings using the old software, configure the touch screen interface for what people saw on the preview, the pictures already taken and the digital buttons. The software knows most common photo booth printers and works with them even better than with normal Windows printer drivers. In computer terms, I felt like I was going from DOS to Windows 7.

Where previously we would have to go into Windows Paint and manually create header and footer image files that had to be saved out and imported, now we can do it just like editing text in Word. I can change out the bride and groom's names and change their date in 10 seconds. I can import a graphic and place it on the top in another 10 seconds. And I can resize the sections of the photo booth images by dragging and resizing, just like anything I can do in a Word document. The software also comes with much more than just a standard four-picture strip style

for templates. It comes equipped with dozens of finished templates (or starting points if you are up for a bit of tinkering).

So, now we can do everything we used to, only more easily, more quickly and better. I'm able to customize the appearance of the system for my staff and the entire experience for my customers. The visual editor for the screen and the photo strips/prints is easy and quick to use. I'm able to change the timing of when things happen, and what the booth says to them and tells them to do next. I'm able to script the end-of-the-night copying of files over to a thumb-drive to hand to the client. I could do most of these things before, but with a lot more work involved.

BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE...

Darkroom Booth 2 also helps us provide services to our clients at events such as Facebook posting, texting out pictures as they happen, quizzes, playing videos, sound and more. Social media is going crazy these days and your brides and their

PHOTO BOOTH UPLOAD

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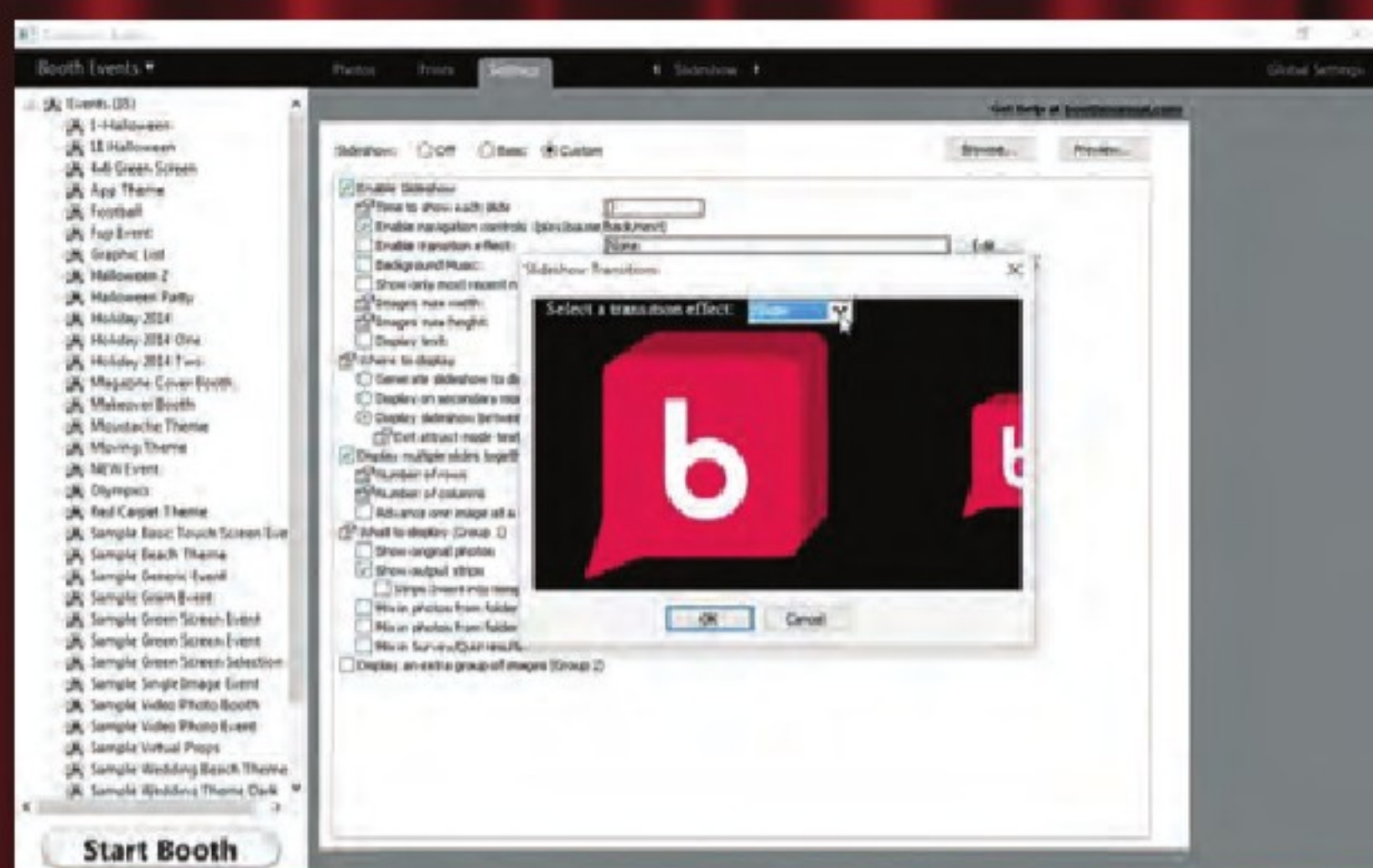
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guests are possibly just as crazy about it. So why not automatically post the pictures to the bride's Facebook event? All you have to do is get her to give you access as an administrator and put in a couple settings on Darkroom Booth 2. Plus you can make it so the users of the booth can post the pictures themselves by authorizing the software. Yes, all of this interactivity can slow down booth activity at event, but it makes the user experience so

as Green Screen, video functionality and slideshow features. But I also see that I can add these easily as the instructions are very clear and the computer and camera are able to support them.

Darkroom's software will run on any computer or laptop running Windows 7 or newer (including the latest Windows 10) and doesn't need a lot of punch unless you are doing lots of green screen

much stronger. Just be cautious when using extra features like Facebook Posting, and MMS/SMS integration at a high traffic event where you have lines stacking up, especially later in the evening when the guests might have trouble typing their information.

Other features I didn't get into testing include such things

or higher end work. It will work with any SLR camera like Canons or Nikons that support tethering. Check with Darkroom if you are wondering how much functionality it will have, as some older cameras will not support live view and might limit your experience. But in general anything less than five years old will do well. Darkroom will work with all printers and has optimized settings for the most common photo booth uses.

Overall, for an investment of \$295 (with two installs as part of the license) it was worth that just in savings of time for staff in prepping and operating at events. The bonus is all the experience that your event attendees will experience. This is a nice jump in functionality for anyone running software more than a couple of years old.

To find out more, and to download a free trial of Darkroom Booth 2, go to the website below. **MB**

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From DJ Learner to DJ Teacher

JASON SPENCER PASSES ON THE SECRETS OF HIS SUCCESS

By Ryan Burger

Jason Spencer is one of those people you have likely run into at a national DJ conference, either speaking up front or in the hallways networking. He's a DJ who is always striving to improve himself and improve the lives of people around him.

He got started in the DJ industry back in San Francisco, when he was a senior in high school, by asking the DJ at a school dance,

branch out once in a while, but it's usually to my established clients."

His mentors include many of the DJs previously mentioned in *Mobile Beat*, such as Randy Bartlett, Peter Merry and others.

"When I started my business, [I attended] the very first time that Peter Merry presented one of his workshops, 'The Professional Process.' I had never really met Peter, but he had announced his book at Mobile Beat, which is where part of my spark came from. He announced on Facebook he was going to do this for a small group of people. I said, 'Hey, I want to be there.' He really had no idea who I was.

"It turns out I was in a class with Randy Bartlett. I was in there with some other big names. Michael Anderson was there. A lot of the Sacramento community, because it was the trip up and down California, but also across the nation. David Lewis from Hawaii was there. Brandon Lindsey was there. There were all kinds of people from across the nation who opened up my world to what it meant to run my own business and network and build a community with other DJs and entertainers who are out there."

SHARING SUCCESS STRATEGIES AT MBLV20

He has certainly learned how to serve his clients better by networking with other DJs. But when it comes to business, he has really sharpened his skills through two books by Mike Michalowicz, *The Pumpkin Plan* and *Profit First*—and he'll be describing how he applied the techniques from these books to his own business as a presenter at Mobile Beat Las Vegas next March.

About *The Pumpkin Plan*, Jason says, "It was about how to grow your business, how to plant this one seed. And then there was the follow-up book to that was a book, *Profit First*. I had built a relationship with the author, Mike Michalowicz, and he and I eventually started talking about what his next book would be. So as he developed ideas for *Profit First*, it was, okay, how can I defeat my check-to-check lifestyle? I know every

DJ out there has experienced this.

The Pumpkin Plan talks about how you should grow your business like how the giant vegetable growers grow their state fair monstrosities. On the pumpkin vine when they first start growing their fruit, you pick an individual pumpkin or two that have the most potential. Then you cut off all the others and just concentrate on feeding the one or two. Thus, you do everything you can for a small number of clients, instead of spending a little time on each of a hundred possible customers. This is something that DJ companies need to look at doing, especially if they are in the corporate or bar markets. Work with one group of clients or venues and pour the majority of your company's time into working to be the world for them.

Profit First is a bit different. Its more about handling your finances and making sure you are making money, not just



"Hey, if you ever need any help, let me know." "He handed me his card and a month later, I was working with him," Jason told us.

"I came up through that other DJ," Jason continues. "Excellent guy, and his company is still one of the biggest ones in the Bay area. They've got a handful of guys over there. But after 13 years with him, I hit this kind of fictitious glass ceiling, if you will, where salaries can only go so far and number of events you can do in a year can only be so many. So I said, 'I have my own ideas. Do you mind if I go out on my own?' So for the last six years, that's what I've been doing—my own thing."

Jason runs a high-end single-operator disc jockey service, and is dedicated to pouring everything he has into serving his clients. "That's the goal, that each client sees me as being all about them. It's a limited number of clients per year, about 40 to 45 is what I target, but it is primarily a wedding industry. I do

prodding along breaking even. As Jason explains it, "The way *Profit First* works is that it goes against the idea of sales minus expenses equals all the leftover stuff, which usually becomes profit at the end of the year. It says that's not the right way to do this because when you're working that way, you're still throwing everything you can at your business and making it work, but then you're struggling. If you look at it a slightly different way—I don't want to quite give it away just yet, although anybody's welcome to go out and look this up and they'll see the new formula. I think it's kind of the big a-ha moment when you see it presented to you live. What happens is you start running a leaner business. You learn to work within the money you have versus trying to do everything at once and then throwing all the money you have at it.

"So you look at it and you say, 'Okay, I only have \$5, so what can I do with \$5?' rather than 'I think I'm going to have \$10 at the end of the month, so I've got these charges here, I've got this charge here, and it's going to cost me \$8.50.' Well, now you still have to come up with \$3.50 because you started with \$5. It's a technique that actually trims your business down. Within two months, I was running leaner than I ever had, with plenty of money in the back for expenses, which started to roll into taking out my debt as well. For those familiar with Dave Ramsey, it actually follows his 'snowball' technique for getting rid of debt."

In addition to hearing about *The Pumpkin Plan* and *Profit First* as part of Jason's presentation at MBLV, he recommends you keep yourself open to learning from EVERYBODY you come in contact with at the event.

"I went in with this mindset that I'm here to learn everything I could learn from a seminar and that's how I'm going to approach it. What I didn't know is there's a lot more learning that happens outside of those seminars. It's usually feedback about seminars, people chatting about what they liked and didn't like, and it carries on from there. But you kind of build this community of DJs over the years, a community of people you've met across the entire nation. Ron Ruth is someone who I met about three years ago...[and] we just sort of hit it off right away. It was actually an accidental meeting. Initially, he thought I was somebody else trying to get some technical feedback for his website. I helped him out with it anyway because that's what I do.

"But just being able to connect with some of these people across the community is amazing. Most of those people have turned into presenters for Mobile Beat in the past. Particularly, this year, there were a lot of people on that stage that I've come to know as friends, and not just colleagues in our industry. That's something that you don't necessarily get if you just go for the

seminar.

"So building that community between the seminars and after the shows and everything else, that's how I approach my shows now. I go to the conference to pick up some nuggets for the presentation, but to also build those new friendships and continue with the ones that I already have."

At events like MBLV, it's important to soak it all in, and then identify the actionable ideas you can take home and implement right away. By briefly describing *Profit First*, Jason has basically provided a preview of one of those potentially game-changing ideas that he'll be presenting.

"I think it's about what you're comfortable with and what you can live off of comfortably. So if you need to make X number of dollars per year and you want to do X number of events per year, then you need to charge X number of dollars for that event per year. That's the equation: I want to do 50 events and make \$50,000. Well, then I need to make \$1,000, after I factor in all my



Photo courtesy of LucieXYZ Photography, - www.LucieXYZ.com

other numbers, right?

"That's actually something else that *Profit First* will help people do is figure out what they really should be charging to make that livable wage, because it helps you plan for your taxes, it helps you plan for your own pay and your expenses, and a few other things there. There's some magical, advanced things that I don't know we'll get too much into in the presentation—don't want to overwhelm everybody."

You can hear more from Jason in this full interview online in the Mobile Beat Digital Edition, but the best way to learn from this successful DJ-entrepreneur is to be at his presentation at MBLV20. You can find more information about his presentation at MobileBeatLasVegas.com. Check out more about Jason Spencer's company at SpencerWeddings.Com. **MB**

From Young Wrestling MC to Seasoned Wedding DJ

AFTER AN INTERESTING INTRO TO PERFORMING, ADAM SKUBA HAS SMACKED DOWN THE SOLO DJ CHALLENGE

By Ryan Burger

Photo by Chris Flachs

“And now, in this corner, battling for the world championship of mobile DJs, out of Lehigh Valley, PA, the champion, Adam ‘The Wild Child’ Skuba!” That’s the type of introduction Adam Skuba (Skuba Entertainment) had to do when he started his career as a DJ/MC back in the Poconos. Yes, he started out as a wrestling announcer. But let’s let him tell you about adventure from wrestling MC to wedding DJ.

“As a kid growing up in the Hazelton area of the Poconos,” says Adam, “one of the former WWF superstars, Afa the Wild Samoan, had a school, the Wild Samoan Pro Wrestling Training Center, in the Lehigh Valley, and he ran shows as part of the training regimen for his students. I got involved with it. I was a fan going to a couple of shows here and there. Mind you, I’m like 13 or 14 years old at this point, and somehow, some way, it came about.

“He asked me if I wanted to be the announcer for his group. He was always about bringing young talent in and training young people and getting young people on board. So I said sure. By that time, my voice had changed and it’s pretty much as you hear it today.

“So I started off as a pro wrestling announcer and I did that for a number of years. We did shows all over the Northeast, up in New York, New Jersey, down on the Jersey Shore. And we went all over. It was a great time. Unfortunately, as anybody who’s ever been involved in an independent wrestling organization knows, there’s like no pay in it. You don’t do it because you’re getting paid well.

“So a guy who was running sound at one of the shows asked me if I had ever considered DJing for extra money. I said, ‘I’m a kid, I don’t need extra money.’ And he said, ‘Oh, you should come out and help me out.’ So I went out with him and he showed me a couple of different things.

“At that point in time, I was about 15 years old. All the kids



to the fact that there was more to the DJ world than what was going on in his own backyard.

"...I think that's the trap that a lot of 'local guys' fall into. They kind of do their own thing and they bump along. And ultimately, to make more money in this business, you have to open your eyes to what's going on on a national level. Not so much worrying about what this or that guy is doing here or there, but just as an educational opportunity—learning to do different things different ways; learning the way they do things out on the West Coast as opposed to on the East Coast. I mean, for me, I didn't even know what the guy an hour away was doing, because I didn't realize there was so much to the industry so to say."

Adam has been a frequent participant in regional get-togethers, trade shows and workshops. He says, "I never walked away from an event, a tradeshow or a webinar, saying 'Oh, that was a waste of time, I didn't learn anything.' There's always something to be learned in everything that you do. I think you just have to look for the nugget in that."

Marketing is something that Adam has learned a lot about at these events, including how important referrals are. When a couple of his regular venues decided that the wedding business wasn't where they wanted to concentrate and had a changeover in management/staff he lost some major connections.

But as online marketing has grown, he has put more and more effort into creating a positive presence in directories like WeddingWire and The Knot. He focuses on getting reviews placed of his

personally handled wedding receptions, complete with DJ services, lighting and photo booth services. For DJs who have trouble encouraging clients to do the reviews Adam offers the following: "I tell my past clients 'I gain future business from you talking about your experience with me. Would you please help me in helping other couples?' And a lot of people, they just give it. There's no fuss about it. I don't pay anybody off. I don't offer free cookies

Reminder: You can access the full audio recordings of nearly all MB interviews via the digital edition of Mobile Beat magazine, available online for free at mobilebeat.com.

or anything like that. It's just a matter of asking. And they've kind of come to expect us to because while they're shopping around, while they're doing their research, they see a lot of reviews, so it's already ingrained in them to have that expectation, that anticipation of giving a review when it's all said and done.

Adam is one of the many proud single ops I know who are able to pull a full-time business from solo DJ work. Seems like a clear indication that he's doing something right!

You can hear the rest of this interview, including a bit on the gear Adam loves, and his relationships with his local "competitors" by checking out the digital edition of Mobile Beat at MobileBeat.Com. **MB**

in my class started having 16th birthday parties. And I went to a private school, so they had some nice parties. It wasn't just your typical backyard bash; they really did it big. So I ended up getting booked by a couple of these kids to do some of their parties. I eventually took the money that I made from that, \$100 here, \$100 there, and bought a sound system. Went out and got my music library base stuff on the greatest hits CDs that they had out at the time."

So Adam's start as a DJ was unique but also had some elements familiar to many of us. Fast-forward to Adam graduating college and his decision that DJing was exactly what he wanted to do for a career. In 2005, he made his move. Visiting websites like ProDJ.Com opened his eyes



To Amp or Not to Amp?

THAT IS THE QUESTION

By Scott Jarema

One of the best things about being a mobile DJ today is the almost endless variety of equipment we have available to us to do our job. Today's DJ can choose from traditional turntables running vinyl or DVS software to DJ controllers, and even tablets. No matter your budget or personal needs, there is something that will fit the bill. Of course this always stirs up debate as to which is best option with regards to choosing the best speakers for our set up.

rig because of the convenience of not having to lug around and additional piece of gear, namely the amplifier.

Some of the drawbacks of running active PA speakers include having to find power for them. Each active speaker requires power to run it. In a perfect world, you could position them right near a serviceable AC outlet and simply plug in. But we all know this rarely happens, so it's necessary to have AC power cables at least as long as your speaker signal cables to run them from the power strip you inevitably have by your set up to the cabinet itself. Another drawback is weight. Let's face it; amplifiers, regardless of being built in or separate, are heavy. Even modern amps still have some heft to them. This really isn't



For the mobile DJ, he or she has basically two options when it comes to PA speaker selection; active, (powered) speakers, or passive (un-powered) speakers. Let's take a look at the differences between them.

TO AMP...

Active or "powered" speakers incorporate a built-in amplifier in addition to the actual speaker transducers. All of the active speaker cabinets today have one or more line/microphone inputs, while some higher-end models even feature multiple inputs along with a basic mixer to control the volume of each input. In addition to this, most also feature a 1/4" TS or XLR line output so you can daisy chain additional active PA cabinets for more coverage at the venue. Another advantage to the active PA speaker is that the built-in amplifier is matched to work with the speakers so you don't have to worry about over- or under-powering your speakers. I personally run active PA speakers with my

too much of a problem for the younger DJs out there, but manhandling an active speaker on top of a stand can be a challenge for some of the older ones. One final thing to consider is redundancy. If you have an amp failure in an active speaker, you lose the speaker. If you have purchased a high quality speaker, you should not have to deal with this but it can and sometimes does happen. My best advice against this is to buy the best speakers you can afford. I learned this the hard way once when I bought a set of "bargain" speakers manufactured by a well known brand and they were nothing but trouble. Trust me; the extra money is well spent on a quality set!

...OR NOT TO AMP?

Passive speakers do not have amplifiers incorporated into their design. They require a separate amplifier (or amplifiers) to drive them. On a passive speaker, like the active types, you will also find different types of inputs mentioned above. Most models

also feature Speakon™ receptacles too. Speakon cables are designed to handle the high power output from your amplifier to the speaker. This PA speaker configuration is probably familiar to a lot of “old school” DJs from years past. I ran this type of setup when I first started out and I still remember fondly my Peavey CS800 that was built like a tank...and it weighed almost as much! Throw anything at it, and it just worked. As with the active speakers, there are advantages and disadvantages to running your rig this way.

First of all, passive speakers are lighter than comparable active speakers, so they’re easier to mount on stands. With a centrally located amplifier, (usually under the table you have your gear on), your power requirements are centralized as well. You don’t need to run power to each speaker’s amp, thus saving set-up and tear-down time. This also allows you to carry less cabling in your kit, but as I always recommend, it’s always a good idea to have extra cables.

Having a separate amp also allows you flexibility when selecting your gear. As with a home stereo composed of separate components, you can pick and choose the best gear for your particular needs or tastes. You can also upgrade your speakers while still keeping your perfectly good amplifier instead of shelling out for



Scott Jarema got started as a mobile DJ in the late 1980s after high school and into college. Between gigs, he works as sales manager for a marine electronics firm in Marina del Rey, California where he currently resides. An avid sailor, he has written articles for boating related publications, and has also held a DJ residency at the California Yacht Club. He has had the pleasure of spinning gigs on Catalina Island as well.

active speakers with new amps every time you upgrade. One of the biggest advantages I have found of this type set up is redundancy. As I mentioned above, if you have an amp failure in an active speaker, you have lost that speaker. With a separate amp, if you lose a channel on the amp, you can usually double up speakers on the working channel, and still finish the gig. Your sound won’t be in stereo, but you also won’t have people repeatedly coming up to you to say, “Hey, you know your speaker is out?!”

The only real disadvantages with this setup are: having to carry around an additional piece of heavy gear that you have to look after; and the need to add additional amplifiers if you are planning on providing coverage over a large area, or you need additional sound reinforcement. With the powered speakers, one only needs to daisy chain them for more sound. You can also daisy chain additional passive speakers too, but you always have to keep in mind that the more speakers you add, the more you tax your amplifier.

In the end, there really is no “right” or “wrong” answer as to which is better. It is ultimately dependent on your operating situations and personal preference. Whether you go with an active or passive solution, the bottom line is to always make sure to purchase the best possible technology you can afford. **MB**

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KRK ROKIT 8 G3 POWERED DESKTOP MONITORS HELP YOUR EARS RELAX AND FOCUS

By Jake Feldman

DJs get asked to do a lot of things. As a matter of fact, because of YouTube, DJs should have their own show on network TV called *DJs Get Asked to Do and Say the Darndest Things!* That's because no longer do we just "play the music" and make some announcements.

We're part wedding planner, part therapist, and part studio engineer whenever a new father-daughter, first dance, garter removal, or entrance fad takes place that requires a bit of audio editing knowledge and a whole lot of patience. That's where the new Rokit line of desktop monitors from KRK Audio comes in.

BACKGROUND

If you're like me, you mainly used headphones for these applications. First, you don't get bothered while you're working on a project, and second, well, headphones are near and dear to a DJ's heart. What I've learned though, is that desktop monitors more accurately represent what the sound will be like from the PA system when the track is actually playing at an event. So it behooves me to use studio monitors when editing and pre-listening (and for impressing the client when playing the track at the pre-event meeting). Also on the plus side, they sound so gosh-darn good, they are a joy to listen to.

THE LINE

I was sent the KRK Rokit 8 G3 Powered versions of the line because of the nature of the music I am mixing (dance music and voice mostly). There are, however different versions in the Rokit line, such as the Rokit 6 G3, Rokit 5 G3, and the Rokit RP10-3 (the first number in each model designation representing the size of the woofer in the monitor). This line has swept into pro studio applications, home studio applications, and is popular with musicians as well as music producers who want to know what their music truly sounds like in the "open air" and away from the restraints of headphones.



THE SPECS AND TECHS

One of the things I have noticed before when looking at desktop or studio monitors has been the harshness of some of the models. If you're familiar with what "harshness" is, it can make a long editing session seem an eternity due to the fatigue it places on your ears. With the Rokit 8 G3s, the lows and highs can be adjusted, so you can coax smoother highs out of the unit's 1" soft-dome high-end driver. They also offer great compatibility with different connections, including RCA, XLR, and 1/4" TRS—meaning you are not limited in their use, even if you're not using a professional sound card as an "out" for the audio from your recording/mixing program.

For being a small monitor, the Rokit 8 G3's have a ton of firepower! While rated at 100W (bi-amped), in a studio like mine, measuring roughly 11 feet by 9 feet (that is my actual office as well), it produces a nice "energy" within the space and truly gets me into the project I'm producing. What makes the difference is the aforementioned soft-dome HF driver and the Aramid 8" glass composite woofer in the cabinet that can produce a frequency range of 35Hz – 35 kHz.

MY TAKE

My mind has been blown open by the possibilities of desktop monitors, in particular these Rokit 8's, since I started using them instead of headphones. Mixes and transitions I thought sounded great on my headphones didn't always sound as good at higher volumes and with a little more firepower in real-world playback situations. Another great application at which the Rokit 8's excel is in voice playback for recording voiceovers and promos (something I've been doing more of over the last few years). They let you know more clearly whether or not you're achieving the sound that you want with own "instrument."

So, for happy ears and, in turn, happier clients, I would recommend grabbing a pair of the Rokit 8's if making custom audio for your clients is on the list of services you provide. **MB**

www.krksys.com

A Powerful Core for Your PA

THE CROWN XLS DRIVECORE™ 2 SERIES EXPANDS

By Michael Buonaccorso, Jr.



Since the beginning of our profession, DJs have relied on the dependability and durability of Crown Amplifiers. (Fun fact: The first issue of Mobile Beat Magazine, back in 1991, featured an advertisement for Crown amplifiers on the back cover.) Today, many mobile DJs use powered (active) speakers, eliminating the need for a stand-alone amplifier. However, just like with all things in life, the majority choice on any given subject doesn't necessarily correlate with the choice that works best for one's own needs.

One great advantage of having a stand-alone amplifier/passive speaker setup is customizability. There are no powered speakers on the market that allow the flexibility available in a stand-alone amplifier setup. For DJs gigging at a new venue every weekend, that extra control may just be the key to making the sound at each and every gig reach optimal levels of clarity.

JOURNEY TO THE CORE

The Crown XLS DriveCore™ 2 Series is the latest in the Crown XLS series of amplifiers. The members of this new series each feature an easy-to-read LCD display, Digital Signal Processing, and Crown DriveCore technology. There are four models in the power matrix for the new XLS series. These dual-channel amplifiers range from 350 to 775 watts per each channel at 4 ohms. (See sidebar for complete specifications.) The specific model that I was sent to review is the XLS 1502. The 1502 puts out 525 watts per channel at 4 ohms.

One of the major reasons for DJs switching to active systems is the savings in weight that comes with combining the speakers and amps in one cabinet. However, at under 11 lbs., the XLS 1502 is certainly light enough to easily carry from gig to gig.

INS AND OUTS

On the back of the unit, several different connections for inputs and outputs make it easy to fit this amplifier into your current setup. An AC power connector uses a standard PC power cable, which is handy because most other DJ gear uses this common cord. For inputs, there are both XLR and 1/4-inch jacks. The 1/4-inch inputs double as throughputs, making it easy to add additional amplifiers. There are also two phono level RCA inputs, allowing the user to connect a turntable directly to this amp. Output options on this amp include binding post output jacks and 4-pole Speakon output connectors.

CONTROLS

On the front of the amp there are two black rotary gain controls. An LED channel input indicator shows output levels at a glance, as well as if your signal is clipping or the amp is going into thermal compression. An LED screen contains controls, settings, and configuration modes. The PureBand Crossover

System, also controllable via the LED screen, allows for low-pass, high-pass, and band-pass filtering on each channel. The Input Sensitivity feature enables playback from sources with low output levels to drive the amplifier to full power. The configura-



tion mode of the XLS can also be selected via the LED screen, as discussed below.

MODES

The Crown XLS series can be used in three different amp modes, configurable via the LED screen on the front of the unit:

Stereo: Each channel functions as a separate amplifier

Bridge: Delivers the power of both channels into a single load of 4 ohms or greater

Input-Y: Both channels are driven by the same input source

THE BOTTOM LINE

The new Crown XLS DriveCore 2 Series amplifiers are lightweight, powerful boxes packed full of features that make them a solid choice for mobile DJs. In addition to this, the entire DriveCore series is covered by a generous 3-year "no-fault" warranty. The warranty is fully transferrable, and, in most cases, shipping is completely covered by Crown. A company that puts out good products, and firmly stands behind them for three years? I'll take it. **MB**

www.crownaudio.com



Michael Buonaccorso, Jr. grew up immersed in a DJ environment, as son of pro DJ and Mobile Beat cofounder, Mike B., Sr. With an inborn curiosity about how things work, he went from repairs on old radios to lawn mowers to automobiles to sound equipment. Not surprisingly, today he holds a bachelors degree in mechanical engineering and runs his own entertainment company. He has attended every Mobile Beat Show since 1997.

Beauty, Brawn, Flexibility

EV'S EKX-12P AND EKX-18SP BOAST A COMPLETE SOUND PACKAGE

By Jake Feldman

I have to be honest—I really have not had much experience with the EV line of products, outside the RE series of mics and a brief foray into the ZX line of powered-speakers many years ago. (Plus there may have been a brief layover at Live-X for a Mobile Beat Tour.) So, this experience (as well as the experience of Mobile Beat Las Vegas in 2015) has been an eye-opening one for me (more on that later).

FIRST IMPRESSIONS ARE KEY

As production coordinator at MBLV19, and really before, when designing the layout of the seminar room and its power needs and specs, I left the sound design to the expert engineers at EV. Even then (I had and have the utmost faith in the EV team) I was skeptical that four hung boxes for mains (along with a dozen subs—can you say “rumble?”) might not be enough “umph” for the effect that the new “MBLV experience” deserved. I can happily tell you I was very wrong, as the EV system in place for that week was breathtaking in its clarity, response, and power. So, I had a good idea of what to expect when I was sent two EKX

12P Powered Speakers and two EKX-18SP Powered Subwoofers to check out.

I have say, right off the bat, that a key design element of these cabinets is that they are sexy. Aesthetically, they are among some of the best-looking speakers out there. The EKX series models are sleek where and when they need to be and classic with the chrome framed (but not gaudy) EV logo that can be lit or left dark.

But they also have the brawn to match that beauty. Their cabinet construction features birch wood covered by a textured, completely encasing but flexible protective coating that really provides the necessary toughness for mobile DJ use—particularly those of us in the Midwest. For us, wood can expand and contract with the extreme temperatures and even shatter if the temps dip below zero and the boxes are accidentally loaded the wrong way.

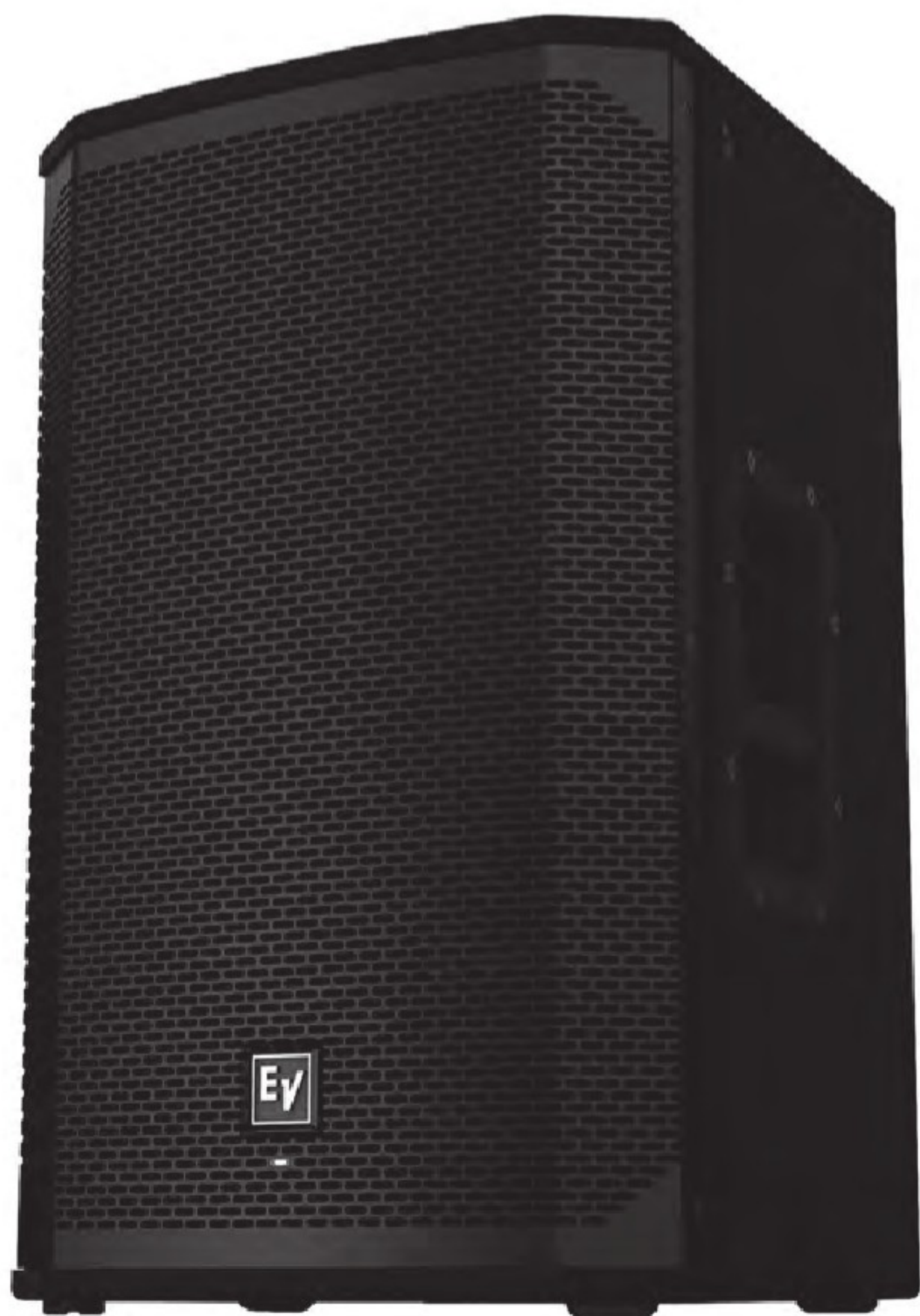
ENOUGH TO ROCK A WEDDING? OR A PROM!

Many times those of us who do weddings, corporate shows, and schools have different rigs we bring out. This EKX rig is the first rig in a great long while I have felt comfortable bringing out to something as delicate (at least early on in the night) as a black-tie wedding, as upscale as a dinner/awards ceremony for a fortune 500 firm, and as demanding as a 550-person homecoming dance (complete with special appearance by the Donald—Donald Trump {the joys of Iowa in campaign season}).

EKX-12P

One difference right off the bat is the power rating of the EKX-12P as compared with its competitor speakers. At 1500W (peak) it has a peak power-cap 500W higher than most in its class (with thermal management technology to ensure that the '12P doesn't overheat). I also have to mention EKX's usability factor due to its LED navigation screen (and single-knob control) that allows quick and easy access

to the onboard QuickSmartDSP user interface system. In this system, you can select the application (and ultimately position of crossover) being accomplished (speech or music), the speakers position (stage, tripod, flown), of course the gain level, and see in



real-time an LED UV-meter that lets you know exactly how much headroom you have (which is shocking how far from unity the levels at normal playback usually are).

The maximum SPL level for the EKV-12P is listed at 132 dB (using pink noise), but I can tell you playback isn't harsh—it's very clean and a nice "round" sound that is pleasant even at high volume. Sound is ultimately achieved through both a 1" high-frequency titanium compression driver and a 12" EVS-12M low-frequency transducer. At average, the speaker draws 1.8Amps, meaning that your whole sound system can easily fit on one circuit—leaving you room for your console/deck/computer as well as LED lights (on a normal 20AMP breaker).

For connect ability, the speaker can be accessed through (1) stereo RCA input, (2) XLR/TRS combo jacks, and (1) XLR link output—of course meaning that in the event of catastrophic system failure (i.e. the most critical component of your

(if used in pairing) which effectively "pushes" (by cancellation of frequencies) the low end toward the audience and not back at the DJ. Basically, it creates a "power alley" on your dance floor and not a 1300 watt x 2 (the peak power rating of the 'woofer) thump in the DJ's chest.

Another difference in the low-end cabinet is the addition of a second XLR output, meaning that both left and right signal sources can be routed through one sub (in a one sub—two speaker configuration). For weddings when only one sub is needed, this makes dialing in sound as well as cable management very easy with adjustable low-pass frequency control for the signal.

MY TAKE

I mentioned before that this experience was eye opening for me. Due to the size of the cabinets (the EKV 12Ps) I was apprehensive about using them as mains for big events mostly due to my limited experience with the EV brand. But, due to my personal experience knowing that the engineers at EV who design these speakers are among some of the best in the business I gave them a



rig failing—the mixer), you can port into the EKV-12P with just an I-pod, computer, and Mic (then chain out to your other main and sub{s) using XLR and still "rock" the event without the client being any the wiser!

EKV-18SP

As Drake said, we "started from the bottom." In this review, I didn't—but maybe should have. In probably (technically speaking) the most impressive subwoofers put out in the past 15 years that are small-scale and meant for DJ use, the EKV-18SPs have a few features that really make sense for the applications and best of all—make the room go "boom" (That, of course, is accomplished via the EVS-18c {18"} low-frequency transducer within).

The QuickSmartDSP feature is operationally the same on the EKV-18SP as it is on the EKV-12P, however it possesses a cardioid control feature that allows (if engaged) inverse setup of the sub



shot and was extremely glad I did. In my estimation, the features, versatility, and most importantly sound quality produced by the EKV series really has gotten me excited about the EV brand!

This EKV series that I have been using has performed outstandingly well at schools, weddings, a fashion show (just love the low end for those) and at corporate events—and with a little fine tuning via the "magic knob," I know that I can nail both my high expectations and the needs of the client and event with these speakers. I personally recommend checking out this series when making your next speaker purchase, **MB**

www.electro-voice.com

Elegant Mobile Sound Solutions

TAKING HK AUDIO'S LUCAS NANO 600 AND ELEMENTS SYSTEMS OUT FOR A RUN

By Marc Andrews



With easily a thousand weddings personally performed under my belt and just as many school dances, I've done my time in the DJ business. So I'm always looking for something different as far as events I do, and this next event was definitely it: a Tuesday afternoon sound reinforcement gig for the school district's cross country meet.

Some new hardware from HK Audio came in a week earlier (via their US distributor, Korg USA), this was the perfect opportunity to forego the full DJ rig I would have lugged out in the past, and be more efficient. My full DJ normal rig for this would be Pioneer MEP 7000 controller hooked up to a MacBook, a full DJ mixer racked up with wireless and a pair

of powered 12" or 15" speakers from our inventory up on tripods.

SAY HELLO TO LUCAS NANO 600

So I took that down instead to the HK Audio Lucas Nano 600, the laptop, and a wired microphone—and I watched it work wonders.

The Lucas Nano 600 (and its little brother the 300) are all-in-one systems that include the sub, satellite speakers and a built-in mixer. In the case of the 600, it's got five inputs to the mixer, a 460-watt power amp driving the dual 4.5" woofers (midrange), a 1" tweeter, and the 10" subwoofer. Total weight on the unit dips under 40 lbs.

When I got to the event and was all set up, my client, who would be making many of the announcements, came over to check out the audio and was amazed at how small the system was. He checked it



with his own voice and was thrilled with the sound. I had it set up in stereo mode with the satellites on separate tripods (using the Stereo Stand add-on) instead of the standard stacked mono setup. Later for the awards ceremony, I did the stacked mono and it performed wonderfully in that configuration also.

The gig proceeded with announcements being made every 15 minutes or so and me playing filler music from the *Mobile Beat* Top 200. I find that the Top 200 chart has enough variety in it to cover such events, and is also a great test of the dynamic range of a sound system when I'm doing reviews on the hardware I'm rolling with that day.

This is a perfect system for ceremony sound, corporate gigs, or any other time you don't want to set up your standard DJ rig. But, even better, I could see handling a full scale wedding event with two of these systems. The sound is excellent, the way the system goes up is great, and when you include the available bag and some of the accessories like the Stereo Stand System and the Roller Bag it's an all-in-one system.

\$1199 from most major DJ and MI

retailers and it's little brother is only \$699. Check out more information at hkaudio.us.

IN YOUR ELEMENT

For this gig, I knew I wanted to get some sound pushing further away from the stage so that the attendees would have more opportunity to hear the announcements and also enjoy some of the pre-run entertainment (music). So, approximately 100-150 feet away, I also set up an HK Elements unit that I had also received. Using an XLR/power combo cable that had great shielding and cushion on the run, I was able to run just one line of cable all the way out to the Elements stack.

The Elements system is one of those "stick"-type systems that many manufacturers are putting out these days. But unlike many of the others I've heard, I was very impressed with the quality of the build and sound that the Element system puts out. I used a single E110 Smart Base (sub and amplifier) and an E835 passive mid/high unit. The E110SubAS is a 600-watt powered sub that also powers the H835 that stacks on top of it via the EP1 speaker pole. The lows are pushed through a 10" low frequency speaker in the E110 and the E835 contains 8 3.5" speakers. (Thus the names make perfect sense, describing what is inside each.)

The EP1 speaker pole is like no other speaker pole I've seen before in that it carries the audio from the sub up to to the highs by integrating the 1/4" jacks into the pole. So this already-elegant speaker system doesn't have cables awkwardly

dangling from top speaker. Adjustable height from just over 3 feet to just over 5 feet, this speaker pole is, to put it simply, cool. The inputs to the powered sub are standard XLR combos with ins and outs so that you can pass to another speaker if you need to, with Speakon outs for a sub or another full range box.

These units are also flexible in that you can put multiple sets of E835 on top of the units with them chaining through each other. The only adjustment you have to make is to the back of the E110, telling it that there are 1-2-3 or 4 of the highs on top, so it sends more power up the pole.

The cost on a full unit like I had with the E110 Smart Base and E835 is a total of just under \$2,000 and you can buy a passive sub unit for the second side if you are pairing like you would on a wedding, so fully configured you are at around \$3,500 for the powered sub, passive sub and two sets of mid-high speakers. Or if you wanted to totally power both sides you are at around \$2,000 per side.

Considering the great sound, ingenious design and elegant look, these HK Audio solutions would certainly be excellent, "sound" investments for your business. Check them out at DJ retailers or find out more at the HK website. **MB**

<http://hkaudio.us>

Karaoke in the Palm of Your Hand

VOCOPRO'S DKP-3 COMPACT DIGITAL SD CARD KARAOKE PLAYER, SUPPORTED BY A JAMCUBE

By Michael Buonaccorso

I wanted to review the new DKP-3 Compact Digital SD Card Karaoke Player from VocoPro, their newest SD card media player. But I realized quickly that I had a problem: The description says "this can be plugged into any VocoPro system with a Stereo Expansion Bay." It was pretty intriguing knowing it's a solid-state unit much more durable than traditional platforms such as CD and hard-drive players, so where would I get a product with a Stereo Expansion Bay?

TEAMING UP...

Fear not, Vocopro was able to provide me with a basic JamCube adding the DKP-3 player into the expansion slot. All the JamCubes are the same, but the JamCube-1 comes with the SDR-4 recorder and JamCube-2 comes with a recorder and wireless microphone. I was told that Vocopro has more products on the drawing board, soon to come out, that will accommodate the stereo module.

The DKP-3 measures a miniscule 2.75" (W) x 3.5" (D) x 1.25" (H) and weighs only one pound. It supports AVI and MP3+G, as well as MP3 audio files. It has its own video output on the module, so there will be two video outputs: one from the DKP-3 and one from, in my case, the JamCube.

With the unit's ability to read SD cards up to 32GB, a performer can carry thousands of songs easily in a pocket. To manage such

large libraries, an Auto-Numbering function will keep files labeled neatly so one doesn't have to spend a lot of time organizing, while enabling quick access to any track from the remote control.

The DKP-3 worked as advertised. It takes a little time to set up the devices, but I was able to complete an entire small singalong event without the use of any discs!

...OR STANDING ALONE

This little player can also be used as a stand-alone unit and patched into any existing sound system with microphone inputs and a display monitor. The JamCube's volume is loud enough for small venues. But if the venue required more volume, I would attach it to other speakers. I am used to older Vocopro units for this purpose such as the Gigstar, and there are pros and cons in a comparison. The Gigstar has a little better sound range and quality, but the portability and more rugged construction of the JamBox is a big plus. Both allow for PA use and ability to amplify musical instruments.

Although this review was basically for the DKP-3 unit, I was also impressed with the combo of good sound and real mobility to found in the JamCube1. The two units combined offer the ability to carry thousands of songs easily over the shoulder with the included carrying strap. If you are looking for an easy way to provide karaoke, this is the combo for you! **MB**

www.vocopro.com



Flyboost: Staying Ahead of the Social Media Engagement Curve

By Jason Jani

How does a DJ do something different to stand out and be ahead of the curve? Sometimes the answer is to take a risk on a new software platform, like Flyboost.

What is Flyboost? Well, it's a web-based social media software aggregator that allows you to incorporate, display and interact with social media posts powered by hashtags at your event. Over the past few months, Flyboost has become an essential part of my personal media presentation when using video screens, and is guaranteed to energize the social experience at a live event. It allows you to display comments, images, and posts from platforms like Instagram and Twitter, in real time.

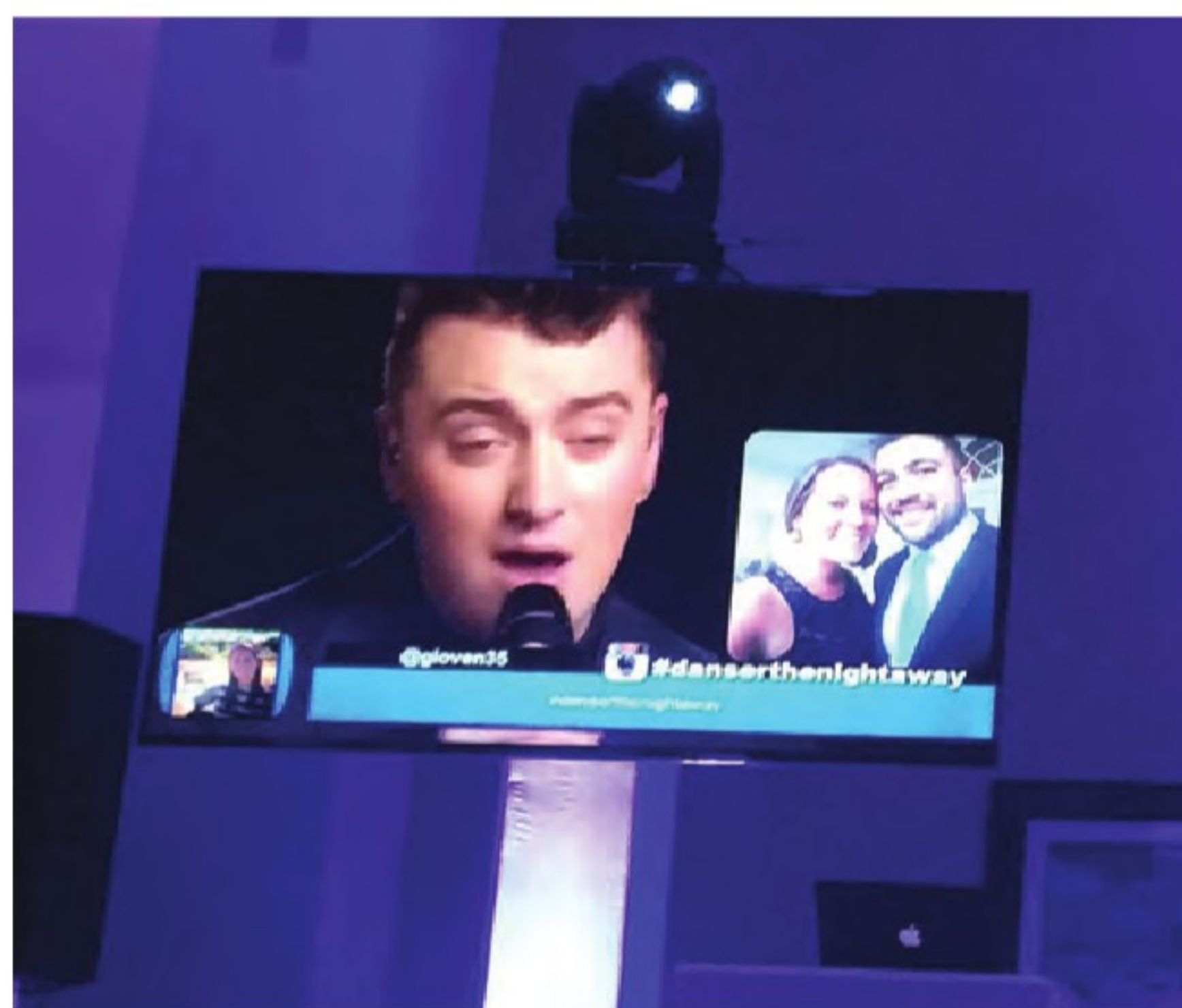
Flyboost adds a special social element to any event involving video projection, from weddings to marquee retail events, nightlife events to corporate fundraisers, and more. This platform allows guests or event attendees to be engaged and socially connected to the event, and allows you the opportunity to collect data from each experience. It is much more than simply posting

Just For You... Special Flyboost Discount Pricing!

In addition to the 7-day trial Flyboost offers, Mobile Beat has secured a deep discount for the first 100 people who subscribe to the Gold Standard Plan using a special promo code. The Gold Standard plan is normally \$49.95/month but the first 100 people to use the promo code can get it for the crazy-low price of \$29.95/month (FOR LIFE). Follow these steps:

- Promo Code: MOBILEBEAT
- Use this link to sign up for your Gold Standard Plan: https://panel.flyboost.com/sign_up?plan_id=4
- Enter promo code "MOBILEBEAT" into the coupon field

Your discounted monthly pricing will remain in place for the life of your membership with FLYBOOST.



images. It offers clients something different, innovative, fun, and entertaining, and is a great way to augment the audio landscape.

Figuring out how to incorporate a super-cool new software platform into your current setup can be an intimidating endeavor at first, but Flyboost makes it easy with a number of different options for event integration.

How it works: There are a number of different ways a user can integrate the platform into their performance. In short, once you register your hashtag, Flyboost can display a live Instagram and Twitter feed that can be run in video programs like Resolume, MixEmurgancy via a Quartz file, or standalone using a full-screen web browser.

From lower-third layovers to full-screen display options, Flyboost gives the user the ability to change the skin and layout

to best fit the application or event at hand, featuring over 1,000 different skin colors, orientations and styles. A template creation engine is also included.

Flyboost can provide full control of anything displayed on a screen (including profanity filter, quarantine mode). It also allows the user to communicate and connect with the audience, straight from the interface.

As an entrepreneur and someone who is always searching for the next thing in the ever-changing entertainment world, I have found that utilizing Flyboost is a sure-fire way to jumpstart the social media promotion segment of your company and services.

I use Flyboost for all my events to enhance the overall experience—not only for the audience, but also for me. I love being able to engage tech-savvy guests with this fresh new software offering, and it has helped me grow my social media reach.

As the headlining DJ for the Mobile Beat Las Vegas 2016 Conference, I have convinced the production team to add Flyboost to the already-amazing atmosphere of the event. It's not only a great product, but also a necessary tool to have in today's competitive market. **MB**

www.flyboost.com

LOCATION-BASED INTELLIGENCE

One powerful benefit of using Flyboost is access to Location-Based Intelligence features. Users can gain an edge on social media and communicate with users on Twitter and Instagram right from the Flyboost interface.

Location-Based Intelligence can help your business: in Sales and Marketing, by engaging prospects based on where they've posted geographically; and with Brand and Reputation Management, allowing you to see what people are really saying about your business.

Your Couple's Wedding, Their Way

**PRACTICAL TIPS FOR
AVOIDING THE SAME
OLD SAME OLD**

By Donnie Lewis

“Your Couple's Wedding, Their Way"...What does that mean? Isn't *their* wedding supposed to be *their* way? Well, of course it is, but a surprising number of couples we speak with are pretty surprised that they can structure their night in many different ways. When we mention formal activities like the bouquet toss or garter removal, a typical response is "Don't we HAVE to do it?" Your answer should be **"ABSOLUTELY NOT!"**

Traditions are great and can be a lot of fun—IF it's something **THEY** want to do. But we always let our couples know the best overall structure to follow is one that perfectly blends both of their personalities and shows them off to their guests. This starts with the ceremony...

ENCOURAGE AND ENHANCE THEIR VISION

What is their vision? Do they have one? Is their vision blocked by tradition? Do they feel like they "have to" have their processional to "Here Comes The Bride?" The answer is NO they don't. Any aspect of their special day can and should reflect what they love and want to show off to their guests. Their prelude and processional music should match their ceremony style. We always recommend the recessional song to match the style celebration they're looking for, but, be appropriate with your suggestions. Let your professional creativity shine and show your couple you are truly there to guide and inspire them. This is their first opportunity to engage their guests and prepare them for the fun and excitement you and your couple have structured.

Specifically, we enjoy recommending our "Timed Ceremonies." These are by far our favorite and most-used ceremony styles. Using a specific song, we hide our bride behind a door and only open the doors to expose her beauty after the artist says the specific "cue" words. (Think "when I see your face" or similar.) The doors open, the groom becomes emotional and the guests who focused on the entire production immediately appreciate what they just saw.

This is something that is very non-traditional...but traditions are not what we are hired for. You were hopefully hired for your passion, creativity and unique style.

Show it off to your couples and in turn they will be inspired to really personalize their ceremony and celebration. The key is to create unique memories filled with emotion that people will talk about, allowing your couple's day to be the day that stands out from the rest. The more emotions you evoke the more they will remember! These emotions should always be filled with positivity, even for a memorial tribute.

Now for the cocktail hour, even though their cocktail hour music is played at a low level it shouldn't be taken for granted. The music style they choose should encourage the style party they are about to have. That doesn't mean playing party music, rather, music that will motivate and energize their guests—great songs with good messages that may trigger emotion from specific couples. Keep it simple but don't just play "background" music. Remember, the night as a whole should flow together seamlessly.

It's now time for their celebration! What style are they looking for with their formal introductions? Is it high-energy with their crowd completely engaged? Or a bit more subdued and casual? What about their first dance: Do they want a choreographed routine or to share the dance with their family and friends (instead of just the bridal party)?

RETHINKING STRUCTURE

No matter how they'd like to execute the beginning of the celebration the number one concern we have is the structure. It seems like most couples enjoy structuring their celebration by starting with their introductions then their first dance followed by both parent dances and finally the toasts. Phew. Just writing that structure tired me out.

The problem we have with this structure is that at some point during the 30 to 45 minutes the guests are expected to stay focused they will typically lose that focus and not give what's happening the attention it deserves. Also, a message is being conveying to the guests that these formal dances are not that important and you just want to "get them over and done with." Remember, you're hired for your expertise, and this includes informing your couple of the issues that may arise because of a timeline they saw on a random website. If they discard your advice, at least you attempted to guide them in the best direction.

The structure is absolutely the most important aspect to their planning and you need to focus on their personality, their wants and needs, along with keeping the guests and the style of party they're trying to achieve in mind. Our favorite structure has the introductions and first dance up front, then inviting the guests to join in the first dance half way in and then on to a dance set that goes until the entree is served. Toasts just before dinner starts, parent dances at the end of dinner, followed by our very special anniversary dance. Then on to the party dancing. The parents deserve the respect of a dance that has the room's complete focus.

On to the end of the night activities...The garter removal and bouquet toss—these are two activities that are fading and fading quickly. They are old school traditions and most couples feel they are making their guests participate in an awkward moment. The option to do this or not is completely up to your couples and how they feel their guests will respond to it, but it is very important to know that if they feel awkward while just thinking about it, it's probably best to just nix it. That awkward feeling will feel a lot worse in front of 150 family and friends and they will pick up on it. If it's something you want to do then have fun with it! This is a great opportunity to show off their sense of humor and to

The garter removal...if they feel awkward while just thinking about it, it's probably best to just nix it. That awkward feeling will feel a lot worse in front of 150 family and friends...

create another emotional experience for their guests. We always say, when stopping the music for an activity that activity should be fun and enjoyable while evoking emotion from their guests.

The last formal activity I'd like to inspire creativity from is the last dance or send-off. We love using songs like "Glad You Came," "Feel This Moment" or the new "Time of My Life." No matter what you choose, make sure they are sent off in a way that, again, shows their personality. Let your professional creativity loose and come up with unique options that match well with different celebration styles. Just make sure you are cueing the guests around formal activities so they are aware and ready, especially the grand send-off. Nothing is worse than having a song end—and then the party ending with it.

I hope I opened your mind a bit and helped you realize the kind of creativity you can inspire in your clients. Our profession is one of the most fun and exciting you can choose, but if you become stagnant or just go with the flow, you are actually making your job harder, not easier. Have fun, be creative and continually challenge yourself to find ways to serve your clients better! **MB**

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DJ INTELLIGENCE®
djintelligence.com

Better Weddings, By the Book

REVIEW: *THE SECRETS OF DJING THE PERFECT WEDDING* BY JASON PARKINSON

By Ryan Burger

The *Secrets of DJing The Perfect Wedding* by Jason Parkinson is a great starter book for DJs and should be standard reading for any wedding DJ. Yes I said “great starter” and “any wedding DJ” together in the same sentence. As a wedding professional who has personally DJ’d over a thousand weddings and whose company has done many thousands, I actually learned a few new ideas and was reminded/refreshed on a bunch of other DJ “best practices.”

Jason Parkinson, the author, is an experienced DJ professional who has done his time DJing the actual events and training a team of DJs. He has laid out the basics in the first section, and in the larger “Secrets” section he’s also presented some great “next level” ideas to be considered.

This is an ebook that includes great graphics and a top-notch layout. It’s perfect for a quick evening read while you’re chilling on the couch, and also keeping it handy digitally in your Kindle library to reference later. The first section on the basics is even color-coded for quick reference to each chapter, like “Basics of Cocktail Hour.” While this section is very rudimentary, it still gives



you a nice overview of what should be happening at a given time during the reception, what the DJ should be doing and what music should be “in the air” at that moment.

While the title of the second section, featuring “The Tricks To Make You The Best Wedding DJ Ever” might be little overstated, it does contain a lot of great ideas, which many DJs probably haven’t thought of. It included things like advice about using certain times to network with vendors (during cocktail hour for instance), providing a printed timeline to all vendors and other quick gems. It repeatedly reminded me of things I used to do and need to start doing again at events. Many ideas fit within Randy Bartlett’s *1% Solution* ballpark of things to do, which is a good indication that the author has learned from many other professionals in the industry.

In addition to organizational and production ideas, Jason also goes into structure of playlists and musical requests. (Looking back on it, I find that my style does follow this structure already, so I must have been doing this right.)

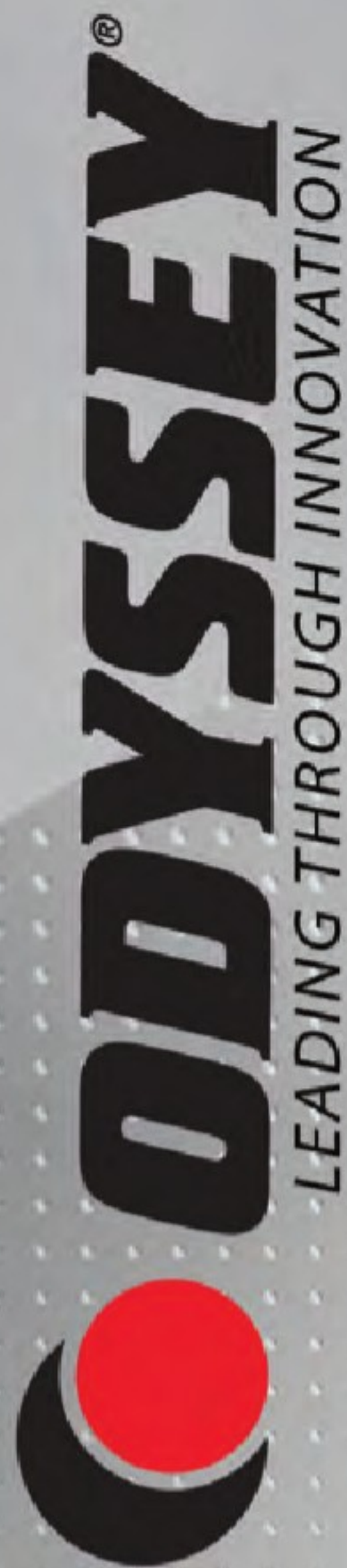
The last section I wanted to note was his “Ice Breaker Secrets—Easy Ways to Encourage Dancing,” which reminded me of things I used to do, like the Bridal Party YMCA, and offered many other ideas I hadn’t thought of.

The ebook purchase also includes an audiobook version of the book and (for a limited time) what Jason calls his “Field Kit.” It includes music lists (similar to the *Mobile Beat* Top 200 sub-charts), planning forms, and my favorite part, the dinner music sets (which I immediately went and plugged into playlists for use at upcoming events).

Check this book and kit out at the website shown below—and get it. Whether you are new to weddings or have hundreds or even thousands under your belt, there is something in it for you! **MB**

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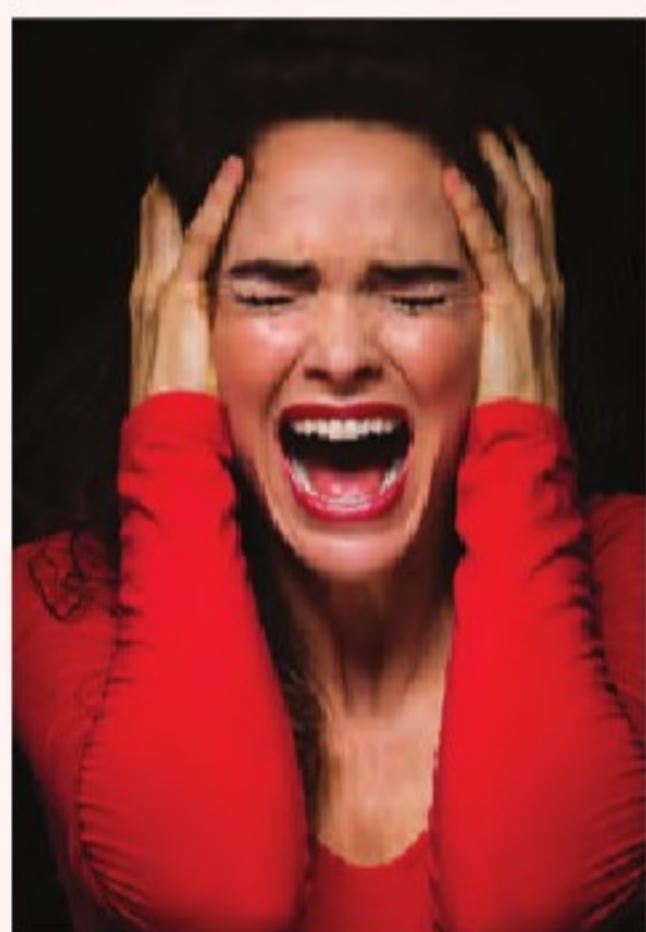
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7 Things DJs Do That Drive Wedding Clients Nuts!

By Stephanie Padovani

Want to stand out from the competition? Here's a simple strategy for you: avoid these common complaints brides and grooms have about DJs.



A quick Google search for complaints against wedding professionals is troubling. The good news is that it should be easy for you to beat the competition simply by not doing these things.

#1: They don't respond.

Couples are consistently frustrated by DJs who don't respond promptly, if at all. Take this quote from a page of bad reviews on Wedding Bee:

"We emailed several times without response. Had not heard from him the week prior to the event like promised. Called left several messages on the work answering machine. His other number was disconnected. Finally he called back at 8pm the night before the event. We were making back up plans at that time wondering if he would show up."

If your response is delayed by even 24 hours, these fears start haunting the minds of your anxiety-ridden couples.

#2: They refuse to give their prices.

When asked, "What was the worst thing about planning the wedding?" the most common answer is budgeting.

Newly engaged couples scour the internet for the pricing of local DJs, trying to educate themselves on the painful process of budgeting. When you refuse to give them a price, it drives them nuts because they have no idea what to expect.

If you don't give them at least some idea of your cost, they'll move on to your competition.

#3: They're late.

If you can't show up on time for a meeting or scheduled call, how can they expect you to show up on time for the wedding?

"Brad was 1 hour late for our face to face meeting at Panera because his office was relocated. Didn't show until we called, said he had a flat tire. Tried to believe him but after everything else I don't know." – Angry review on Wedding Bee

#3: They don't follow through.

Your intentions are good, but you overcommit. Every time you don't follow through on your promises, it destroys trust.

When you let the couple down about one thing, they'll assume you're going to

do the same on the wedding day.

#4: They disappear after the booking.

Brides and grooms are haunted by fears of the DJ who doesn't show up. The media fans those flames with warnings about "wedding scams," like this from the Huffington Post, "You call and call, text and email frantically, but to no avail. They took your money and ran like the wind."

When you book them 18 months prior to the Big Day and then don't contact them again until a week before, couples are left doubting. Check in with your couples regularly during the planning process and be the one thing they don't have to worry about.

#5: They make assumptions about what the couple wants.

Years ago, my husband and I met with a bride and her very Italian mother. "Would you like us to play a Tarantella?" I asked.

"Thank you so much for asking!" the mother-of-the-bride responded. "I can't stand the Tarantella! The last DJ we met just assumed."

Don't pigeon hole your clients by making incorrect assumptions that can be avoided with a simple question.

#6: They talk too much.

DJs are notoriously a chatty bunch. It's a part of our charm. But when you talk over the top of your clients, not only do you miss the important details of what they're looking for, you also make them angry.

Take this complaint from the WeddingWire forum:

"I really loved this baker's cake and was so close to booking her until she turned a little crazy.... started telling me all these things she was going to do (literally the exact opposite of what I had just said I wanted) and practically held me hostage in her studio for 2 hours... I couldn't get a word in."

Excitement is good. Blabbing about yourself instead of listening to your client is not.

#7: They don't make the couple feel special.

Weddings are a cultural event wherein the couple—especially the bride—gets to indulge their need to feel truly special.

If you treat couples like just another booking on your calendar and you can't remember the details from one wedding to the next, you're not giving them the specialness they crave.

Another example from Wedding Bee:

"The lady is just really short with me in emails. I type out 5 paragraphs and I don't even get so much as a 'hi' and then like a five word response. Not once has she said thank you, even though I sent her the contract signed and am sending the deposit on the tenth. It's not hard to say 'hello' in an email to at least acknowledge that this person is important to you."

Remember that these couples are dropping tens of thousands of dollars on one day. Make them feel special by giving them attention throughout the planning process.

FAILURE TO COMMUNICATE

Each of these complaints boils down to poor communication. Any of these situations could have been avoided, along with those bad reviews, if the wedding vendors in question had taken the time to listen and follow through.

Be the oasis in the storm for your couples and your business will be rewarded handsomely. **MB**



Stephanie Padovani and her husband, Jeff, are the dynamic husband-wife duo behind Book More Brides, the #1 marketing resource for the wedding industry. Visit BookMoreBrides.com/priceshopper to learn "How to Position Yourself as a Valued Wedding Expert in Only Five Minutes."

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 66

Multi-Op Essentials

Money. You will need money to grow your company. Using cash will hold back operations. Having a bank that believes in you and lets you borrow money will help you reach your goals faster and more easily. Businesses borrow money. It's a good thing. Investing in yourself is the best investment you can make.

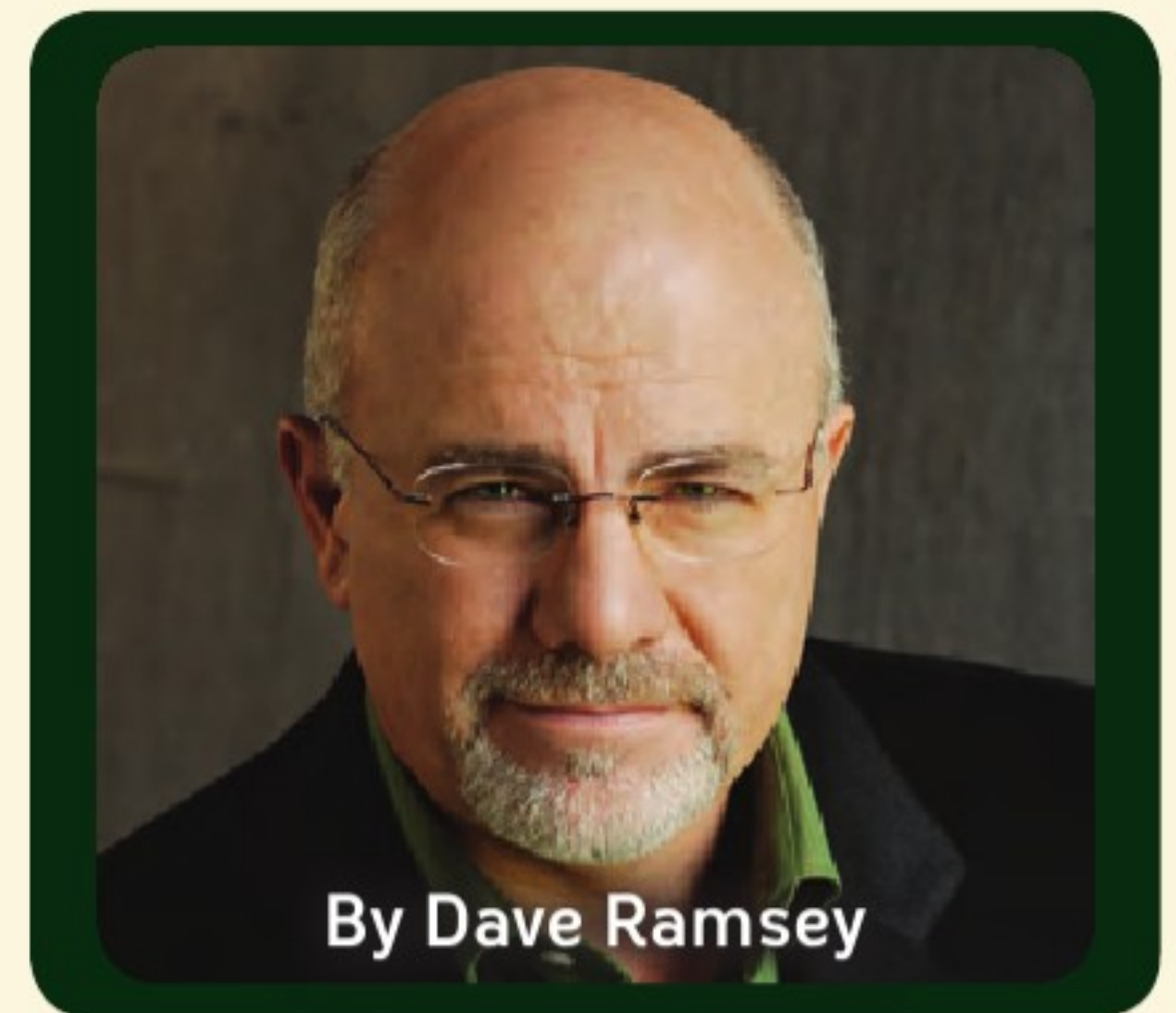
Decisions. Every day of the week, you, as the CEO, will have to make decisions. Some will be bad, most should be good. Not making any decision is a death trap. No one has all the right answers. There isn't a business owner around that hasn't made a mistake either. Get the best information you can and make a decision. Good or bad, just make it. If it's bad, don't make it again. The most successful business owners are ones that make decisions.

Your Role. I really believe that your role as the business owner needs to be just that. The owner. I get that you are the foundation of the business. You are the one who started it and you are the one that you think people are always going to want. I mean, let's face it, you still love to do it. I get it. However, you have to try and shift that mindset. You need to hire people and let them be the star of your company. You need to be the owner, not the quarterback. The more you are the quarterback, the less you can concentrate on growth. And growth is what gets you to your goal. Not being the DJ every weekend. Make it a point to remove yourself from doing the events and work on the business. Besides, as you get older, you are going to want to enjoy the weekends and watch your business work for you.

Profit Margin. Think of this as your heartbeat. For a service industry like ours, I think a 60% gross profit margin is healthy. Anything below a 50% margin and you are probably feeling like your constantly drowning. Anything above 70-75% is extremely good. Always know and work your margins as they will be a basic metric to show you the health of your business.

There are so many more things I could tell you, but I think these basics will point you in the right direction as you start or grow your multi-op business. Good luck! **MB**

Telling Time Where to Go, What to Do



By Dave Ramsey

One of the most popular small business questions I receive on a regular basis might surprise you. It goes something like this: "How do you run a successful company without it completely taking over and ruining your life?"



The average small business owner works more than 60 hours a week. And no matter how much you love your job, those hours over a long period of time, will begin to take a toll. Pretty soon your family, your health and the company itself will begin to suffer.

Before I began to study the principles of time management, I thought the whole idea was some kind of slick, money-making scheme hatched by a know-it-all who had never really worked for a living. But a funny thing happened. As I applied some simple time management principles to my life, I began to get

more accomplished. In addition, I wasn't as tired mentally and physically as I was before. I was on-task, efficient and I had more energy—even at the end of the day!

Most entrepreneurs are hard-charging, bust-through-and-get-it-done types of people. The last thing we need is to feel like a rat in a wheel, just running and running but never getting anywhere. To enjoy our work, we must have a plan and a sense of traction and accomplishment. My friend John Maxwell says a budget is telling your money where to go. Well, the same principle can be applied to your time. You can plan ahead and tell it where to go, or you can scratch your head and wonder where it went.

Years ago, I never viewed time management for the purpose of productivity as something with personal or spiritual implications. Then, I was told that today's system of minutes and seconds was developed by 14th-century monks, who were also mathematicians. They were able to formulate calculations breaking hours into minutes and minutes into seconds. Before that, time was measured only in hours using instruments like a sundial. The monks did this work with the purpose of gaining the ability to more precisely worship God.

Managing time and money well, and viewing them as precious commodities, should be a normal exercise in both our professional and personal lives. **MB**

Dave Ramsey is America's trusted voice on business and money, and CEO of Ramsey Solutions. He has authored five New York Times best-selling books, including EntreLeadership. The Dave Ramsey Show is heard by more than 8.5 million listeners each week on more than 550 radio stations. Follow Dave on the web at www.entreleadership.com.

This Place Couldn't Survive Without Me...

...NOT!

By Jeffrey Gitomer

When I was 19, my dad made me production manager of his 75 employee kitchen cabinet manufacturing factory. Before I officially took the job I worked in the shop at each job, and set production standards based on what I could produce at each station.

On my first official day as boss, Ozzie, our superstar cabinet assembler (main guy in the most important position), came to me and asked for a 25¢ per hour raise. I went to my dad for advice and he said, "Give it to him, son." So I did.

A week later Ozzie returned and demanded another 25¢ raise, and he said he would quit if he didn't get it. I went back to my dad for advice and he said, "Fire him, son." I went nuclear, "You can't fire Ozzie," I pleaded, "the place will fall apart." "Fire him, son," he repeated. So I did.

I dreaded the next day. But to my everlasting surprise, four guys came forward to claim Ozzie's position. We had a contest to see who would get it. Production was up 25% and "Mr. Irreplaceable" was replaced in less than 24 hours—and was never missed. How irreplaceable do you think you are, Ozzie?

I have heard salespeople boast on hundreds of occasions:

- If it wasn't for me this place would fold.
- If it wasn't for me we'd be out of business.
- This place couldn't survive without me.
- I do all the selling so this place can operate.
- My sales built this place.

Those are warning chants that the end is near.

Here are 9.5 early warning signals that your sales brain has stopped functioning.

1. You think sales reports are a waste of time.
2. Everyone else does wrong things except you.
3. You get blamed for things you're certain are someone else's fault.
4. You think your sales production could be better - if you just got a few breaks.
5. You don't listen to sales information in the car, or do anything to further your sales education.
6. You're way too cocky, cynical, and critical.
7. At night you socialize or watch TV instead of read and

plan your next day.

8. You go to sales calls unprepared (no personalized ideas for the prospect or information about the prospect).

9. You think most prospects and customers are dumb (or at least not as smart as you).

9.5 You think your boss is stupid.

Many salespeople are failing or doing poorly and claim they don't know why, or blame everyone and their dog. Many more salespeople get fired and claim or blame the same way. Truth is they can't or won't face themselves. They blame others and things instead of taking personal responsibility.

If you're doing poorly and you blame "circumstances,"—take a look in the bathroom mirror.

If you get fired and you leave thinking it's someone else's fault - you'll likely repeat the process at your next job.

If you get blamed and you think it's someone else's fault - think again.

It may take one face down spill in the gutter to wake you up. But it's a whole lot easier (and less costly) to catch yourself before you fall.

Success Strategies: Here are a few positive steps that will lead to better personal and team responsibility.

- Look at your belief system. To succeed at sales you must believe that you're the best, your company is the best, and that your product is the best. All three are needed to succeed.

- Rededicate yourself to be more customer focused—not me focused. Customer dedication eliminates a lot of the ego problems. When you're busy helping customers, your time to brag and complain diminishes.

- Rededicate yourself to get more educated. Listen to attitude and sales information an hour a day.

- Work longer hours. Get there an hour before everyone else. People who struggle to get to work "on-time" never seem to make it.

- Get more "help" oriented. Help others get sales. Help others succeed. Help customers get what they want and need.

- Transition from cocky to self-confident. Show it with deeds, not words.

- Transition from blaming others to taking responsibility. Most of the time when things go wrong, you could have done something to prevent it. Admit fault. Take the hit without a bunch of defensive whining.

- Read (re-read) *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, by Dale Carnegie, and *Think and Grow Rich*, by Napoleon Hill. The two bibles of business and sales success. Rededicate yourself to those success principles.

- Admit the truth to yourself. Admit fault. Then document what you could have done to have prevented the problem or made things better. Then make a daily (morning) plan to make a change for the better.

In order for the things and circumstances of your life to change—you must change first. Not much will happen without a change in your thought process, your attitude, and maybe eating a piece of humble pie. Admit it—it starts with you. **MB**

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Jeffrey Gitomer is the author of 12 best-selling books, including *The Sales Bible*, *The Little Red Book of Selling*, *The Little Gold Book of Yes!* and *21.5 Unbreakable Laws of Selling*. His real-world ideas and content are also available as online courses at www.GitomerLearningAcademy.com. For info about training and seminars visit www.Gitomer.com or www.GitomerCertifiedAdvisors.com, or email Jeffrey personally at salesman@gitomer.com.

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Multi-Op Essentials

KEYS FOR SCALING YOUR DJ BIZ SUCCESSFULLY

By Jason Weldon

Running a multi-op DJ company was something I always wanted to do. The thought of having a solid group of DJs that maintained a high level of talent, as well as being committed to their craft, excited me.

I knew we could be one of the solid companies in the area and that we could honestly be a good decision for our customers. I just had to find the right way to do it. The right way to bring the vision in my head to the real world.

Coming from an entrepreneurial family certainly did help. Making a business scalable was what everyone around me was doing with their businesses, so I knew from experience that finding a way to scale my company was the only way to make that dream happen.

Before I go into more depth on some things that can help you become or grow your multi-op company, here are some reasons why I did NOT want to become a multi-op:

- For the fast cash it might bring
- For the prestige and fame of being a "DJ"
- Bragging rights of a DJ or business owner
- To be a mediocre service that took advantage of people
- Because it was cool

I became a DJ because I loved spinning music. I loved making people happy. It was so rewarding and I was good at it. I wanted to show other people how to do it as well. I realized I could give the same training to another person, helping them better their life. And then that person could go out and make more people happy. And so on and so on. I found that I could capitalize not only on my talent, but on other people's talent, as well as being able to manage them.

The key moment for me was realizing that I could show other people how to do it. This is why most people are afraid of becoming a multi-op or fail at becoming a successful one. You don't know the proper way to go about showing people how you do it. And after all, people are booking you because of the way you do it. Period. So the quicker you can be an effective, efficient and compelling business owner, the more successful you will be.

So let's look at some things that can help you grow your

mobile DJ company:

Goals. You need an end goal. What does your company look like 5 years out? 10 years out? 20 years out? Do you want to sell it? Pass it down to your children or family? Having a clear, concise end goal allows you to prepare, from the beginning, how YOU want to run your company. My goal was always to eventually sell the company. So a lot of my decisions are based on that outcome. What is your goals?

Advisors. You need a team of advisors. An accountant, a lawyer, a banker and a financial advisor should be your main set of people. Then try and find other business owners who have more mature businesses than yours and ask them to be part of your advisory council. The more smart people you have around you, the better your decisions will be.

Read The E-Myth by Michael E. Gerber. Trust me. Just read it.

Training. Create a solid training program that details every single part of your business. A lot people think of the performance side of things when it comes to training. And while that is important, there is also the administrative side of the business as well. For example, how are you going to keep track of the bookings? How are you going to market to your prospects? How are you going to meet with customers? Let me give you an example. When I first started, I hired my first full-time employee and never thought about a phone system. I went and invested



in a small, two phone system. Then when we grew, I needed a larger phone system. Instead of just adding another line, I went and bought one of those big, PBX systems that had way more than we needed at the time, but it was able to handle our growth for the next 5 years. I planned ahead, spent my money wisely and was able to grow easily. Another example I give people is on hours of operation. You have to know when you are going to be open. And there is a time when you are closed! You need your "you" time.

Human Resources. If there is one thing I could/should do better it is HR. When I say HR, I mean finding talent, training talent, proper classifications of talent, payroll, culture, and everything else that comes along with it. The most important part of your business is the talent. The most tedious part of your business is the talent. It will always be this way. Talent takes time and needs time. Make sure you prepare yourself for this part of your company.

Jason Weldon is a wedding business consultant who specializes in small to medium-sized companies that want to grow their business. His objective is to help guide people through organizing their thoughts and laying the groundwork for a better, more successful start-up. He currently lives in Philadelphia and is also the president of Synergetic Sound and Lighting, Inc. and DJ and A/V company.



TURN TO PAGE 63

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